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D E F E
O F T H E
FEMALE SEX.

interspersed with Reflections upon
LOVE and TASTE.

Written for the Honour of the FAIR SEX.

By a LADY.

In what will all Mens Ostentation end?

L O N D O N :

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To the Ingenious Mrs. *****

MADAM,

SOME People can no more escape Dedications, than others expect them. A tolerable Judgment will direct one to that Person who is generally approved of in the World. The fine Genius, and the agreeable Manner, is too conspicuous to be overlooked, and the Choice is sure to center where the Majority of Opinions are already fixed beforehand.

I do not approach you, *Madam*, out of any Confidence in the Merits of this Essay, but of the Cause which it pleads; wherein the Honour of the whole Sex seemed to demand no less a Patronage than that of the Best a-

DEDICATION.

mong them, whom they are ambitious of admiring.

I have only endeavoured to reduce the Sexes to a Level, but your illustrious Example daily convinces the World of our Superiority.

I had attempted the Character of a consummate Woman, could I, tho' but faintly, have studied your inimitable Graces; but the Impossibility of the Task forced me to desist.

You are so habitually correct in your Words and Actions, that I conclude all you say or do, to be the Result of the maturest Deliberation; from whence I am certain, that it flows from an inexhaustable Fund of good Sense, with a Mixture of the politest Breeding.

The Ladies of your Acquaintance cannot be sensible of this, without fancying they improve every time they converse with you: If this would be too great a Vanity, yet it must be allowed, that you inspire us

with

DEDICATION.

with Endeavours after Improve-
ments, and make us ambitious of
pleasing you: Among whom, none
is more so, than

Your Most Humble,

And Most Obedient Servant,





ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is judged right to acquaint the generous Encouragers of this Work, that the greatest Part of them did not choose to have their Names inserted in the List of Subscribers for certain Reasons, therefore this List is printed lest Offence might be given





A

D E F E N C E

O F T H E

L A D I E S.

W H E N first I began to
 examine into the real
 Talents of my Sex in ge-
 neral, it was purely from a Desire of
 improving them in myself, to the full
 Extent of the Capacity I might possi-
 bly find myself gifted with by Hea-
 ven. And tho' the Prejudice I had
 imbibed from vulgar Error falsely
 convinced me, that I should find the
 Sphere which *Women* are capable of
 acting in extremely narrow ; I
 thought it, nevertheless, a Duty in
 all to make ourselves perfectly ac-
B quainted

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quainted with all our Obligations, by a full Discovery of the Province of our Abilities. In reality, I don't yet see how any *Woman* (or *Man* either) can answer the End of their Creation in the faithful Discharge of all they ought to do, without first being perfectly apprized of all they can do. Upon these Principles, I began my Enquiry; and as I can with the utmost Veracity aver, that I entered into it without the least Pride or Partiality to my own Sex, so I can with equal Safety say, that all the Prejudice I set out with was in Favour of the *Men*; tho' the Honesty of my Intentions soon helped to undeceive me. I was not long in my Pursuit, before I discovered a much wider fairer Field of Female Glory to expatiate in than I expected; and upon the nicest, most unpassionate Comparison of my own Sex with the opposite, to my great Astonishment, I found *Woman*, by her Nature, formed no less capable of that is good and great than *Man*; and that the Authority which they have usurped over us, is from Force, rather than the Law of Nature.

Having

Having got the better of Prepossession, I was sensible of the vast Advantage which Education gives that arrogant Sex over us, and could not help being provoked to Scorn and Indignation, at the little mean Artifices which most of them practise to deprive us of the same Benefit: But what incensed me most was, to consider the immense Fund of Knowledge, and useful Discoveries, which their grovelling Jealousy has, by such Means, robbed the World of.

The Defence of our Sex, *Madam*, against so many and great Wits, as have strongly attacked it, may justly seem a Task too difficult for a Woman to attempt. Not that I can or ought to pretend, that we are by Nature less enabled for such an Enterprize, than Men are, which I hope at least to shew plausible Reasons for before I have done; but because, thro' the Usurpation of Men, and the Tyranny of Custom, there are at most but few, who are by Education, and acquired Wit or Letters, sufficiently qualified for such an Undertaking. For my Part, *Madam*, I shall readily own, that as few as there

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are, there may be, and are Abundance, who in their daily Conversations approve themselves much more able and sufficient Asserters of our Cause, than myself; and I am sorry, that either their Business, their other Diversions, or too great Indulgence of their Ease, hinder them from doing publick Justice to their Sex. The Men, by Interest or Inclination, are so generally engaged against us, that it is not to be expected that any one Man of Wit should arise so generous as to engage in our Quarrel, and be the Champion of our Sex, against the Injuries and Oppressions of his own. Those romantick Days are over, neither indeed do we desire them; we can plead our own Cause, and will defend ourselves whenever it becomes necessary. Sometimes, indeed, I have observed a Set of Gentlemen, called Beaus, speak some slight Things in our Favour; but these Animals can no more commend in earnest a Woman's Wit, than a Man's Person; and they compliment us, only to shew their good Breeding and Parts. Sometimes in their Airs they will pretend

to be Admirers of our Sex, and at other times level their Scandal at our whole Sex, and think us sufficiently satisfied, if out of the Story of two thousand Years they have been able to pick up a few Examples of Women illustrious for their Wit, Learning, or Virtue, and Men infamous for the contrary; in this manner they think to please us, tho' I hope there are but few Women who have not Sense enough to see through such Advocates.

A *Spanish* Writer affirms, that the History of Don *Quixote* has been the Ruin of the Monarchy of *Spain*; and the Reason he gives for it, is, that he has set the Valour for which that Nation was once so famous, in so whimsical and ridiculous a Light, as has quite softened and enervated their Courage.

Moliere has done no less Prejudice to the *French*, by his Comedy of the *Female Pedants*. From that Period, Learning is thought to derogate almost as much from a Woman's Reputation, as their giving into Vices that cast the greatest Stain on their Character; so that when they found

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them-

* *Les Femmes Scavantes.*

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themselves censured for devoting themselves to Learning, and the most innocent Pleasures and Amusements; they judged that since Reproach must follow, from the Men, it were but just they should make Choice of that particular Species of it, as had most Gratifications, and accordingly they abandoned themselves to Pleasure; but who does not see that the Men are to blame for first ridiculing our Gallantry, and when, by our meek Submission, they conquered, they laughed at us. Oh dear Madam, methinks were I a Lady like you, with all the Charms that can adorn our Sex, I would shew these arrogant Creatures, that we have Sense and Spirit too, to discern, resent, and repel their Ambition. Lord *Florio*, you know, who made Love to Lady *Betty* J——, would in his frequent Visits tell her, how infinitely he admired her fine Sense and great Prudence, in the Management of her Affairs; and at his Return to his Intimates, he would abuse and despise her good Oeconomy, telling them, she was only fit for a Sempstress or a Cook-Maid, because

cause he observed her always at work herself, or directing her Family. Thus you see, Madam, these Mortals would destroy a Woman's Reputation, because we sometimes have Sense enough to discern a Coxcomb, and to treat him as he deserves, by forbidding him our Company, when the poor Soul has, after an Harangue of an Hour or two, told us in Fact he is a Fool. I remember, Madam, an ingenious Poet says,

*Th'obsequious Lover, when he lowest lies,
Submits to conquer, and but kneels to rise.*

In these two Lines the Poet represents their Unfaithfulness and Insincerity in a just Manner, which in my Opinion makes nothing for them.

I shall not enter into any Dispute whether Men or Women be generally more learned; that Point must be given up to the Advantages Men have over us by their Education, Freedom of Converse, and Variety of Business and Company. But when any Comparison is made between them, great Allowances must also be made for the Disparity of those Circumstances. Neither shall I contest about the Pre-eminence

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eminence of our Virtues: I know there are too many vicious, and I hope there are a great many virtuous of both Sexes. Yet this I may say, that whatever Vices are found amongst us, they have in general both their Source and Encouragement.

The Question I shall at present handle is, whether the Time an Ingenious Gentleman spends in the Company of Women may justly be said to be misemploy'd, or not? I put the Question in general Terms; because whoever holds the Affirmative must maintain it so, or the Sex is no Way concerned to oppose him. On the other Side I shall not maintain the Negative, but with some Restrictions and Limitations; because I will not be bound to justify those Women, whose Vices and ill Conduct expose them deservedly to the Censure of the other Sex, as well as of their own. The Question being thus stated, let us consider the End and Purpose for which Conversation was at first instituted, and is yet desirable; and then we shall see whether they may not all be found in the Company of Women.

Women. These Ends, I take it, are the same with those we aim at in all our other Actions; in general only two, Profit or Pleasure; these are divided into those of the Mind, and those of the Body: Of the latter I shall take no further Notice, as having no Relation to the present Subject; but shall confine myself wholly to the Mind, the Profit of which is the Improvement of the Understanding, and the Pleasure is the Diversion and Relaxation of its Cares and Passions. Now if either of these Ends be attainable, by the Society of Women, I have gained my Point. However, I hope to make it appear, that they are not only both to be met with in the Conversation of Women, but one of them more generally, and in greater measure than in Mens.

A Writer of a very great Character, agrees that Women are happily possessed of all the Charms and Graces of the Imagination. *Everything*, says he, *that relates to Taste, is properly their Province; and they are Judges of the Beauties and Perfections of Language: Witness Madam Dacier of France,*

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France, *Mrs. Rowe of our own Country, and many others.* Now what do we not owe to the Beauties of the Imagination; 'tis that which forms the Poet and the Orator; nothing can administer so ravishing a Delight as those delicate Imaginations, where every Idea is gay and smiling; if to Beauty you join Strength, they then triumph over the Soul, and drag away with the sweetest Violence; for the Pomp of Charms is more capable of captivating the Mind than Truth. The Imagination is the Source, the Guardian of our Pleasures; and 'tis to that alone we owe the pleasing Illusion of the Passions. As it keeps up the most constant Correspondence with the Heart, it supplies it with whatever Errors it may wish for; it extends also its Privileges over Time by awaking the Remembrance of past Pleasures, and giving us an Antepast of all those which Futurity promises to bestow.

Among the several Advantages which Women are allowed to possess 'tis owned they have an exquisite Taste for judging such Things as are beau

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beautiful in their Kind. A very learned Lady tells us, that Taste results from the Harmony and Agreement between Wit and Judgment; and that every one's Taste is more or less perfect proportionable to the Harmony between these. To the quickness of Taste belongs the Judgment of what we call Beauty, Sentiment, Decorum, Delicacy, or the most refin'd Part of Wit; and 'tis by its Impulses we give to every thing its just Value. This is what *Montaigne* understands when he affirms, that the Women have *un esprit plein d'autier*, or a swiftly penetrating Mind. Taste furnishes the Heart with the most delicate Sentiments, and a certain Attentive Politeness in the Commerce of the World, which teaches us to pay a Regard to the Self-Love of those with whom we converse. In my Opinion, Taste results from the two following Particulars, a very delicate Sensation of the Heart, and a just Turn of Mind. It must therefore be confessed, that Men don't consider how great a Present they make the Ladies, when they allow them

them a Delicacy of Taste. And now Madam, having shewed that our Sex by far exceeds the Men for Delicacy of Taste and Sentiment, I hope to make it appear, that our Conversation is desirable. Our Company is generally, by our Adversaries, represented as unprofitable and disagreeable to Men of Sense; and by some of the most vehement Sticklers against us, as criminal. These Imputations, as they are unjust, especially the latter, so they favour strongly of the Malice, Arrogance and Sottishness of those that most frequently urge them, who are commonly either conceited Fops, whose Success in their Pretensions to the Favour of our Sex, has been no greater than their Merit, and fallen very far short of their Vanity and Presumption; or a Sort of morose, ill-bred, unthinking Fellows, who appear to be Men only by their Habit and Beards, and are scarce distinguishable from Brutes, but by their Figure. But I shall wave these Reflections at present, however just, and come closer to our Argument. If Women are not
quali-

qualified for the Conversation of ingenious Men, or, to go yet farther, their Friendship, it must be because they want some one Condition, or more, necessarily requisite to either. The necessary Conditions of these are sense, good Nature; to which must be added, for Friendship, Fidelity, and Integrity. Now, if any of these be wanting to our Sex, it must be either because Nature has not been so liberal as to bestow them upon us; or because due Care has not been taken to cultivate those Gifts to a competent Measure in us.

The first of these Causes is that which is most generally urged against us, Raillery, or Spight. I might easily cut this Part of the Controversy short, by an indefragable Argument, which is, that the express Intent and Reason for which Woman was created, was to be a Companion and Help-mate to Man; and that consequently those that deny them to be so, must argue a Mistake in Providence, and think themselves wiser than their Creator. But these Gentlemen are generally such passionate Admirers of

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themselves, and have such a profound Value and Reverence for their own Parts, that they are ready at any time to sacrifice their Religion to the Reputation of their Wit; and, rather than lose their Point, deny the Truth of the History. There are others that tho' they allow the Story, yet affirm that the Propagation and Continuance of Mankind, was the only Reason for which we were made; if the Wisdom that first made Man could not without Trouble have continued that Species by the same, any other Method, had not this been most conducive to Happiness, which was the gracious and only End of Creation. But these superficial Gentlemen wear their Understanding like their Cloaths, always set and formed out of Fashion. Beasts that, rather than any Part of their outward Figure should be damaged, would wipe the Dirt off their Shoes with their Handkerchiefs, and that value themselves infinitely more upon modish Noise, than upon the best Sense against the Fashion. But since I

not intend to make this a religious Argument, I shall leave all further Considerations of this Nature to the Divines, whose more immediate Study it is, to assert the Wisdom of Providence in the Order and Distribution of this World, against all that shall oppose it. To proceed therefore, if we be naturally defective, the Defect must be either in Soul or Body. In the Soul it cannot be, if what I have heard some learned Men maintain be true, *that all Souls are equal, and alike*; and that consequently there is no such Distinction as Male and Female Soul; that there are no innate *Ideas*, but that all the Notions we have are derived from our external Senses, either immediately, or by Reflection. These metaphysical Speculations, I must own, *Madam*, require much more Learning and a stronger Head, than I can pretend to be Mistress of, to be considered as they ought; yet so bold I may be, as to undertake, when any of our jangling Opponents think fit, to refute them.

Neither can it be in the Body (if we may credit the Report of learned

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Physicians) for there is no Difference in the Organization of those Parts which have any Relation to, or Influence over, the Minds; but the Brain, and all other Parts (which I am not Anatomist enough to name) are contrived as well for the plentiful Conveyance of Spirits, which are held to be the immediate Instruments of Sensation, in Women as Men. I see therefore no natural Impediment in the Structure of our Bodies; nor does Experience or Observation argue any: We use all our natural Faculties, as well as Men, nay, and our rational too, deducting only for the Advantages before-mentioned. Let us appeal yet further to Experience, and observe those Creatures that deviate least from simple Nature, and see if we can find any Difference in Sense or Understanding, between Males and Females. An Ape, a Dog, a Fox, are by daily Observation found to be more docile and more subtle than an Ox, a Swine, or a Sheep: But a *She-Ape*, is as full of, and as ready at, Imitation, as a *He*: A Bitch will learn as many Tricks as a Dog:

A Female Fox as many Wiles as a Male. A Thousand Instances of this Kind might be produced ; but I think these are so plain, that to instance more were a superfluous Labour. I shall only once more take Notice, that in Brutes and other Animals, there is no Difference betwixt Male and Female in Point of Sensibility and Sagacity. — Tho' were I disposed to dispute this Point, I could shew that for Sensibility the Women are far superior ; that this Disposition of the Soul is a great Advantage to them, without which the Soul would be dead to Humanity or Generosity. A bare Sensation or Impulse, a single Emotion of the Heart, has more Power over the Soul, than all the Maxims of the Philosophers ; and it is allowed that Women of that Character, possess numberless Charms ; those sprightly, those swift-darting Graces are indulged to them only. A Lady who was so finished a Woman that she might have sat for the *Graces*, is a Proof of my Assertion. A Man of Wit, a Friend of hers, being one

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Day

Day asked what were her Employments, what he thought in her Recreations; he answered, her Life was never a Life of Thought, but of pure Sensation. All those who knew her are agreed, that Nature never formed so enchanting a Creature; and that Tastes prevailed over her Imagination and her Reason in so happy a manner, that her Tastes were ever justified by her Reason, and respected by her Friends. None of her Acquaintance ever presumed to censure her, but in her Absence; for the Moment she appeared, she was no longer in Fault. This is a Proof that nothing triumphs in so absolute a manner, as that Superiority of Mind which flows from Sensibility, and a Strength of Imagination, and that, because it is ever attended with Persuasion.

Women generally owe nothing to Art. Wherefore then should any one be displeased, because Nature has freely indulged us a Perfection of Mind? Men deprave all those Dispositions which Nature has bestowed on

us; they begin by neglecting our Education; they don't employ our Minds in Things of a solid Turn, and this the Heart takes Advantage of; they form us purely to please; and we give great Pleasure from our Charms and Conversation. Then, in Consequence of this, we devote our whole Study, or however too much of it, to the Improvement of our exterior Charms, and are easily carried away by the Propension of Nature.

But if an Argument from Brutes and other Animals shall not be allowed, as conclusive, I shall desire those that hold against us, to observe the Country People, I mean the inferior Sort of them, such as not having Stocks to follow Husbandry upon their own Score, subsist upon their Labour. For, amongst those, tho' not so equal as that of Brutes, the Condition of the two Sexes is more equal, than amongst Gentlemen, City Traders, or rich Yeomen. Examine them in their several Businesses, and their Capacities will appear equal; but talk to them of Things

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Things indifferent, and out of the Road of their constant Employment, and the Ballance will fall on our Side. The Women will be found the more ready and polite. Let us look a little farther, and view our Sex in a State of more Improvement, amongst our Neighbours the *Dutch*. There we shall find them managing not only the Domestick Affairs of the Family, but making and receiving Payments as well great as small, keeping the Books, ballancing the Accounts, and doing all the Business, even the nicest of Merchants, with as much Dexterity and Exactness, as their our Men can do. And I have often heard some of our considerable Merchants blame the Conduct of our Countrymen in this Point, that they breed our Women so ignorant of Business; whereas were they taught Arithmetick, and other Arts which require not much bodily Strength, they might supply the Places of a bundance of lusty Men, now employed in sedentary Business, which might be a mighty Profit to the Nation, by sending those Men to Employment.

employments, where Hands and Strength
 are more required, especially at this
 time, when we are in such Want of
 people. Besides that, it might pre-
 vent the Ruin of many Families,
 which is often occasioned by the Death
 of Merchants in full Business, and
 leaving their Accompts perplexed,
 and embroiled, to a Widow and Or-
 phans, who understanding nothing of
 the Husband or Father's Business, oc-
 casions the rending, and oftentimes
 the utter confounding of a fair Estate,
 which might be prevented, did the
 Wife but understand Merchants Ac-
 compts, and were made acquainted
 with the Books. I have yet another
 Argument from Nature, which is,
 that the very Make of our Bodies shew
 that we were never designed for Fa-
 tigue; and the Vivacity of our Wits,
 and Readiness of our Invention (which
 we confessed even by our Adversaries)
 demonstrate that we were chiefly in-
 tended for Thought, and the Exer-
 cise of our Mind; whereas on the
 contrary it is apparent, from the
 strength and Size of their Limbs, the
 vigour and Hardiness of their Con-
 stitutions,

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stitutions, that Men were purposely framed and contrived for Action and Labour. And herein the Wisdom and Contrivance of Providence is abundantly manifested; for as the one Sex is fortified with Courage and Ability, to undergo the necessary Drudging of providing Materials for the Subsistence of Life in both; so the other is furnished with Ingenuity and Prudence for the orderly Management and Distribution of it, for the Relief and Comfort of a Family; and is over and above enriched with a peculiar Tendernefs and Care requisite to the cherishing their poor helpless Offspring. I know our Opposers usually miscale our Quickness of Thought, Fancy and Flash; and christen their own Heaviness by the specious Name of Judgment and Solidity; but it is easy to retort upon them the reproachful ones of Dulness and Stupidity with more Justice. I shall pursue this Point no farther, but continue firm in my Persuasion, that Nature has not been so niggardly to us as our Adversaries would insinuate till I see better Cause to the contrary.

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an I have hitherto at any time done.
et I am ready to yield to Convic-
on, whoever offers it, which I don't
suddenly expect.

It remains then for us to enquire,
whether the Bounty of Nature be
holly neglected or stifled by us, or
so far as to make us unworthy the
company of Men; or whether our
education (as bad as it is) be not
sufficient to make us useful, nay, a
necessary Part of Mankind. This
Cause is seldom indeed urged against
us by the Men, tho' it be the only
one that gives them any Advantage
over us in Understanding. But it
does not serve their Pride, there is
no Honour to be gained by it; for a
Man ought no more to value himself
upon being wiser than a Woman, if
he owes his Advantage to a better
Education, and greater Means of In-
formation, than he ought to boast of
his Courage for beating a Man when
his Hands were bound. Nay, it
would be so far from honourable to
contend for Preference upon this
Score, that they would thereby at
once argue themselves guilty both of
Tyranny

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Tyranny and Fear: I think I need not have mentioned the latter; for none can be Tyrants but Cowards. For nothing makes one Party slavishly depress another, but their Fear that they may, at one time or other become strong or courageous enough to make themselves equal, if not superior, to their Masters. This is our Case; for Men being sensible as we are of the Abilities of Mind in our Sex as of the Strength of Body in their own, began to grow jealous, that we who in the Infancy of the World were their Equals and Partners in Dominion, might in Process of Time, by Subtlety and Stratagem, become their Superiors; and therefore began in good time to make use of Force (the Origine of Power) to compel us to a Subjection Nature never meant; and made use of Nature's Liberality to them, to take the Benefit of her Kindness from us. From that time they have endeavoured to train us up altogether to Ease and Ignorance; as Conquerors use to do to those they reduce by Force, that so they may disarm them both of

Courage

Courage and Wit; and consequently make them tamely give up their Liberty, and abjectly submit their Necks to a slavish Yoke. As the World grew more populous, and Mens Necessities whetted their Intentions, so it increased their Jealousy, and sharpened their Tyranny over us, till by degrees, it came to that Height of Severity, I may say Cruelty, it is now at in all the Eastern Parts of the World, where the Women, like our Negroes in our Western Plantations, are born Slaves, and live Prisoners all their Lives; nay, so far has this barbarous Humour prevailed, and spread itself, that in some Parts of *Europe*, which pretend to be most refined, and civilized, in Spite of Christianity and the Zeal for Religion which they so much affect, our Condition is not very much better. *Women* might say in their own Behalf, how tyrannical are Men? They will not allow us to make the least Use of the Faculties of our Minds. Ought they not to rest satisfied with having Dominion over the Impulses of our Hearts, without attempting the same

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Sway over our Understandings? They tell us, that it is as indecent to adorn and cultivate our Minds as to resign up our Hearts. Certainly this is extending their Privileges too far.

'Tis very much the Interest of the Men to bring the other Sex to a Self-recollection, and their original Duties. This Divorce of the Woman from herself, is the Source of all her Errors. When we are not internally supported by the most solid and well-grounded Inclinations, we are fickle and wavering. 'Tis in Solitude and Retirement that Truth dictates her Instructions; and 'tis there we are taught to set a just Value on those things which our Imaginations have over-rated. When once we have found out the Art of employing the Mind in the Study of instructive Subjects we insensibly suck in the most solid and substantial Aliments; and those diffuse themselves into every Part of our Behaviour. Once there were Houses where every one was indulged, either in Thought or Expression where the *Muses* and the *Graces* formed the most lovely Society; there one might

They might learn the most instructive Lessons of Delicacy and Politeness; there the most renowned Princesses might enjoy the Pleasures of Converse with the Learned and Witty: But now be it recorded, to the eternal Dishonour of the Men, that we are forbid such Assemblies. You will excuse, I know, Madam, this short Digression, because it shews a probable Reason, why we are at this time in such Subjection to them, without lessening the Opinion of our Sense, or natural Capacities, either at present or for the Time past; besides that, it briefly lays open, without any Scandal to our Sex, why our Improvements are at present so disproportioned to those of Men. I would not have any of our little unthinking Adversaries triumph at my allowing a Disproportion between the Improvements of our Sex and theirs; and I am sure those of them that are ingenious Men, will see no Reason for it from what I have said.

After having granted so great a Disparity as I have already done, in the customary Education, and advan-

tageous Liberties of the Sexes, 'twere
 Nonsense to maintain that our So-
 ciety is generally and upon all Ac-
 counts as beneficial, improving, and
 entertaining as that of Men. He must
 be a very empty Fellow that resorts
 to and frequents us, in Hopes, by
 our Means, to make himself confi-
 derable, as a Scholar, a Mathematici-
 cian, a Philosopher, or a Statesman.
 These Arts and Sciences are the Re-
 sult only of much Study and great
 Experience; and without one at least
 of them, are no more to be acquired
 by the Company of Men, however
 celebrated for any or all of them,
 than by ours. But there are other
 Qualifications, which are as indis-
 pensably necessary to a Gentleman,
 or any Man that would appear to Ad-
 vantage in the World, which are at-
 tainable only by Company and Con-
 versation, and chiefly by ours. Nor
 can the greatest Part of Mankind, of
 what Quality soever, boast much of
 the Use they make or the Benefit
 they reap, from these acknowledged
 Advantages. So that Scholars only,
 and some few of the more thinking
 Gen-

Gentlemen, and Men of Business, have any just Claim to them. And of these the first generally fall short enough some other Way to make the Ballance even. For Scholars tho' by their Acquaintance with Books, and conversing much with old Authors, they may know perfectly the Sense of the learned Dead, and be perfect Masters of the Wisdom, be thoroughly informed of the State, and nicely skilled in the Policies of Ages long since past; their neglect of Business, and constant Conversation with Antiquity, they are such Strangers to, and so ignorant of, the domestick Affairs and Manners of their own Country and Times, that they appear like the Ghosts of old *Romans* raised by Magick. Talk to them of the *Assyrian* or *Persian* Monarchies, the *Grecian* or *Roman* Commonwealths, they answer like Oracles; they are such finished Statesmen, that we should scarce take them to have been less than Confidents of *Semiramis*, Tutors to *Cyrus* the Great, old Cronies of *Solon*, and *Lycurgus*, or Privy Councillors at least to the

Twelve *Cæsars* successively: But engage them in a Discourse that concerns the present Times, and their Native Country, and they hardly speak the Language of it, and know so little of the Affairs of it, that as much might reasonably be expected from an animated *Egyptian* Mummy. They are very much disturbed to see a Fold or a Plait amiss in the Picture of an old *Roman* Gown, yet take no Notice that their own are thread-bare, out at the Elbows, or ragged; and suffer more if *Priscian's* Head be broken, than if it were their own. They are excellent Guides, and can direct you to every Alley and Turning in *Old-Rome*: Yet lose their Way in their own Parish. They are mighty Admirers of the Wit and Eloquence of the Ancients: Yet had they lived in the Time of *Cicero* and *Cæsar*, would have treated them with as much Supercilliny, Pride, and Disrespect, as they do now with Reverence.

They are great Hunters of ancient Manuscripts, and have in great Veneration any thing that has escaped the

the Teeth of Time and Rats ; and if
 age has obliterated the Characters, 'tis
 the more valuable for not being legi-
 ble. But if by Chance they can pick
 up one Word, they rate it higher than
 the whole Author in print, and would
 give more for one Proverb of *Solomon*
 under his own Hand, than for all his
 Wisdom. These superstitious, bi-
 ased Idolators of Time past, are Chil-
 dren in their Understanding all their
 Lives: For they hang so incessantly
 upon the Leading-Strings of Autho-
 rity, that their Judgments, like the
 Limbs of some *Indian* Penitents, be-
 come altogether cramped and motion-
 less for want of Use. But as these
 Men will hardly be reckoned much
 superior to us upon the Account of
 their Learning or Improvements, so
 neither will, I suppose, another
 sort, diametrically opposite to these
 in their Humours and Opinions:
 I mean those, whose Ancestors
 have been wise and provident, and
 saved Estates by their Ingenuity
 and Industry, and given all their
 posterity after them Means and
 leisure to be Fools. These are
 gene-

generally sent to School in their Minority, and were they kept there till they came to Years of Discretion, might most of them stay till they could tuck their Beards into their Girdles, before they left carrying a Satchel. In Conformity to Custom, and the Fashion, they are sent early to serve an Apprenticeship to Letters, and for eight or nine Years are whipt up and down, through two or three Countries, from School to School; when being arriv'd at sixteen or seventeen Years of Age, and having made the usual *Tour* of *Latin* and *Greek* Authors, they are call'd home to be made Gentlemen. As soon as the young 'Squire has got out of the House of Bondage, shaken off the Awe of Birch, and begins to feel himself at Liberty, he considers that he is now learned enough (and 'tis ten to one but his Friends are wiser enough to be of his Opinion) and thinks it high time to shake off the barbarous Acquaintance he contracted with those crabbed, vexatious, obscure Fellows, that gave him so much Trouble and Smart at School, Companions

no means fit for a Gentleman, that
 rit only to torment and perplex
 or Boys, and exercise the Tyranny
 Pedants and Schoolmasters. These
 udent Resolutions taken, his Con-
 ersation for some Years succeeding
 wholly taken up by his Horses,
 ogs, and Hawks (especially if his
 esidence be in the Country) and
 e more senseless Animals that tend
 em. His Groom, his Huntsman,
 and his Falconer, are his Tutors, and
 s Walk is from the Stable to the
 og-Kennel, and the Reverse of it.
 is Diversion is Drudgery, and his
 ghest Satisfaction when he is most
 r'd. He wearies you in the Morn-
 g with his Sport, in the Afternoon
 ith the noisy Repetition and Drink,
 and the whole Day with Fatigue and
 onfusion. His Entertainment is
 ale Beer, and the History of his
 ogs and Horses, in which he gives
 ou the Pedigree of every one with
 ll the Exactness of a Herald ; and if
 ou be very much in his good Graces,
 is odds but he makes you the Com-
 liment of a Puppy of one of his fa-
 ourite Bitches, which you must take
 with

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with Abundance of Acknowledgment of his Civility, or else he takes you for a stupid, as well as an ill-bre'd Fellow. He is very constant at Clubs and Meetings of the Country Gentlemen, where he will suffer nothing to be talk'd or heard of, but his Jades, his Curs, and his Kites. Upon these he rings perpetual Changes and trespasses as much upon the Patience of the Company in the Tavern as upon their Inclosures in the Field and is least impertinent when most drunk.

His grand Business is to make an Affignation for a Horse-Race, or Hunting-Match; and nothing displeases him so much as a Disappointment. Thus accomplish'd, and finish'd for a Gentleman, he enters the Civil Lists, and holds the Scales of Justice with as much Blindness, as she is said to do. From henceforward his Worship becomes as formidable to the Ale-Houses, as he was before familiar; he sizes an Ale-Pot and takes the Dimensions of Bread with great Dexterity and Sagacity. He is the Terror of all the Deer and Poultry

s. poultry-Stealers in the Neighbour-
 od, and is so implacable a Persecu-
 of Pochers, that he keeps a Regi-
 at a of all the Dogs and Guns in the
 hundred, and is the Scare-Beggar of
 the Parish. Short Pots, and unjusti-
 ble Dogs and Nets, furnish him
 with sufficient Matter of Present-
 ments, to carry him once a Quarter
 the Sessions; where he says little,
 ts and drinks much, and after Din-
 er, hunts over the last Chace, and
 rides worshipfully drunk Home
 ain. At Home, he exercises his
 authority in granting his Letters-Pa-
 ts to Petitioners for erecting Sho-
 l-Board Tables, and Gingerbread-
 Disapalls. If he happens to live near
 y little Borough, or Corporation,
 at sends Burgesses to Parliament,
 may become ambitious, and sue
 for the Honour of being made their
 representative. Henceforward he
 bows popular, bows to, and treats
 the Mob all round him; and whether
 ere be any in his Discourse or not,
 ere is good Sense in his Kitchen
 and Cellar, which is more agreeable
 and edifying. If he be so happy as
 to

to out-tap his Competitor, and draw his Neighbours into an Opinion of his Sobriety, he is chosen, and up comes to that Honourable Assembly where he shews his Wisdom best by his Silence, and serves his Country most in his Absence.

I give you these two Characters *Madam*, as irreconcilable as Water and Oil, to shew that Men may, and do often baffle and frustrate the Effects of a liberal Education, as well by Industry as Negligence. 'Tis hard to say which of these two is the most sottish; the first is such an Admirer of Letters, that he thinks it a Disparagement to his Learning to talk what other Men understand, and will scarce believe that two and two make four under a Demonstration from *Euclid* or a Quotation of *Aristotle*: The latter has such a Fear of Pedantry always before his Eyes, that he thinks it a Scandal to his good Breeding and Gentility, to talk Sense, or write true *English*; and has such a contemptible Notion of his past Education, that he thinks the *Roman* Poets good for nothing but to teach Boys to

ap Verses. For my Part, I think the learned and unlearned Blockhead pretty equal; for 'tis all one to me, whether a Man talk Nonsense or unintelligible Sense; I am diverted and pleased alike by either; the one enjoys himself less, but suffers his friends to do it more; the other enjoys himself and his own Humour enough, but will let no body else do so in his Company. Thus, *Madam*, I have set them before you, and shall leave you to determine a Point, which cannot.

There are others that deserve to be brought into the Company of these upon like honourable Reasons; but I keep them in Reserve for a proper place, where I may perhaps take the pains to draw their Pictures to the life at full Length. Let us now return to our Argument, from which we have had a long Breathing-while. Let us look into the Manner of our Education, and see wherein it falls short of the Mens, and how the Defects of it may be, and are generally supply'd. In our tender Years they are the same; for after Children can

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talk,

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talk, they are promiscuously taught to read and write by the same Persons, and at the same time both Boys and Girls. When these are acquired, which is generally about the Age of six or seven Years, they begin to be separated, and the Boys are sent to the *Grammar-School*, and the Girls to *Boarding-Schools*, or other Places, to learn Needle-Work, Dancing, Singing, Musick, Drawing, Painting, and other Accomplishments, according to the Humour and Ability of the Parents, or Inclination of the Children. Of all these, Reading and Writing are the main Instruments of Conversation; tho' Musick and Painting may be allow'd to contribute something towards it, as they give us an Insight into two Arts, that make up a great Part of the Pleasures and Diversions of Mankind. Here then lies the main Defect, that we are taught only our Mother-Tongue, or perhaps *French*, which is now very fashionable, and almost as familiar among Women of Quality, as Men; whereas the other Sex, by means of a more extensive Education to the Knowledge

of the *Roman* and *Greek* Languages, have a vaster Field for their Imaginations to rove in, and their Capacities thereby enlarged. To see whether this be strictly true or not, I mean in what relates to our Debate, I will for once suppose, that we are instructed only in our own Tongue, and then enquire whether the Disadvantage be so great as it is commonly imagin'd. You know very well, *Madam*, that, for Conversation, it is not requisite we should be Philologists, Rhetoricians, Philosophers, Historians, or Poets; but only that we should think pertinently, and express our Thoughts properly, on such Matters as are the proper Subjects for a mixt Conversation. The *Italians*, a People as delicate in their Conversation as any in the World, have a Maxim, That ourselves, our Neighbours, Religion, or Business, ought never to be the Subject. There are very substantial Reasons to be given for these Restrictions; for Men are very apt to be vain and impertinent when they talk of themselves; besides that others are very jealous, and

apt to suspect, that all the good things said, are intended as so many Arguments of Preference to them. When they speak of their Neighbours, they are apt, out of a Principle of Emulation and Envy, natural to all the Race of *Adam*, to lessen and tarnish their Fame, whether by open Scandal, and defamatory Stories and Tales, or by malicious Insinuations, invidious Circumstances, sinister and covert Reflexions. This Humour springs from an Over-fondness of ourselves, and a mistaken Conceit that another's Loss is an Addition to our own Reputation; as if like two Buckets, one must necessarily rise as the other goes down. This is the basest and most ungenerous of all our natural Failures, and ought to be corrected as much as possible every where; but more especially in *Italy*, where Resentments are carry'd so high, and Revenges prosecuted with so much Heat and Animosity. Religion is likewise very tender there, as in all other Places, where the Priests have so much Power and Authority. But even here, where our Differences and Disputes have
made

made it more tame, and us'd it to rough handling, it ought carefully to be avoided ; for nothing raises unfriendly Warmths among Company, more than a religious Argument, which therefore ought to be banish'd all Society, intended only for *Conversation* and *Diversion*. Business is too dry and barren to give any Spirit to *Conversation*, or *Pleasure* to a *Company*, and is therefore rather to be reckon'd among the Incumbrances than Comforts of Life, however necessary. Besides these, Points of Learning, abstruse Speculations, and nice Politicks, ought, in my Opinion, to be excluded ; because, being things that require much Reading and Consideration, they are not fit to be canvass'd *extempore* in mixt Company, of which 'tis probable the greatest Part will have little to say to them, and will scarce be content to be silent Hearers only ; besides that they are not in their Nature gay enough to awaken the good Humour, or raise the Mirth of the Company. Nor need any one to fear, that by these Limitations, Conversation shou'd be re-

strain'd to too narrow a Compass, there are Subjects enough that are in themselves neither insipid, nor offensive: Such as Love, Honour, Gallantry, Morality, News, Rallery, and a numberless Train of other things copious and diverting. Now I can't see the Necessity of any other Tongue beside our own, to enable us to talk plausibly or judiciously upon any of these Topicks. Nay, I am very confident, that 'tis possible for an ingenious Person to make a very considerable Progress in most Parts of Learning, by the Help of *English* only. For the only Reason I can conceive of learning Languages, is to arrive at the Sense, Wit, or Arts, that have been communicated to the World in them. Now, of those that have taken the Pains to make themselves Masters of those Treasures, many have been so generous as to impart a Share of them to the Publick, by Translations, for the Use of the Unlearned; and I flatter myself sometimes, that several of these were more particularly undertaken by ingenious good-natur'd Men, in Kind-

ness and Compassion to our Sex. But whatever the Motives were, the obliging Humour has so far prevail'd, that scarce any thing, either ancient or modern, that might be of general Use either for Pleasure or Instruction, is left untouch'd, and most of them are made entirely free of our Tongue. I am no Judge either of the Accuracy or Elegance of such Performances; but, if I may credit the Report of learned and ingenious Gentlemen (whose Judgment or Sincerity I have no Reason to question) many of those excellent Authors have lost nothing by the Change of Soil. I can see and admire the Wit and Fancy of *Ovid* in the Translation of his Epistles and Elegies, the Softness and Passion of *Tibullus*, the Impetuosity and Fire of *Juvenal*, the Gaiety, Spirit, and Judgment of *Horace*; who, tho' he may appear very different from himself through the Diversity and Inequality of the Hands concern'd in making him speak *English*, yet may easily be guess'd at from the several excellent Pieces render'd by the Earl of *Roscommon*, Mr. *Cowley*, Mr. *Dryden*,

den, Mr Congreve, Mr. Brown, and other ingenious Gentlemen, who have oblig'd the Nation with their excellent Versions of some Parts of him. Nor is it possible to be insensible of the Sweetness and Majesty of *Virgil*, after having read those little but divine Samples, already made publick in *English* by Mr. Dryden and Dr. Trapp, which give us so much Impatience to see the whole Work entire by those admirable Hands. I have heard some ingenious Gentlemen say, That it was impossible to do Justice in our Tongue to these two last celebrated *Roman* Poets; and I have known others, whose Judgments I have as high an Opinion, affirm the contrary: Ignorance of *Latin* disables me from determining whether we are in the Right; but the Beauty of what I have already seen by the Means of those Gentlemen, has so far prejudic'd me in Favour of the latter, that might I have them entire from the same Hands, I think I shou'd scarce envy those who can taste the Pleasure of the Originals. Nor is it to the

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Poets only that we stand indebted for the Treasures of Antiquity: We have no less Engagements to those who have successfully labour'd in Prose, and have made us familiar with *Plutarch*, *Seneca*, *Cicero*, and, in general, with all the famous Philosophers, Orators, and Historians; from whom we may at once learn both the Opinions and Practices of their Times. Assisted by these Helps, 'tis impossible for any Woman to be ignorant, that is but desirous to be otherwise, tho' she know no Part of Speech out of her Mother-Tongue. But these are neither the only nor the greatest Advantages we have; all that is excellent in *France*, *Italy*, or any of our neighbouring Nations, is now become our own; to one of whom, I may be bold to say, we are beholden for more, and greater Improvements of Conversation, than to all Antiquity and the learned Languages together. Nor can I imagine for what good reason a Man skill'd in *Latin* and *Greek*, and vers'd in the Authors of ancient Times, shall be call'd learned; yet another, who perfectly under-

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understands *Italian, French, Spanish, High-Dutch*, and the rest of the *European Languages*, is acquainted with the modern History of all those Countries, knows their Policies, has div'd into all the Intrigues of the several Courts, and can tell their mutual Dispositions, Obligations, and Ties of Interest one to another, shall affect all this be thought Unlearned, for want of these two Languages. Nay tho' he be never so well vers'd in the modern Philosophy, Astronomy, Geometry, and Algebra, he shall notwithstanding, never be allow'd that honourable Title. I can see but one apparent Reason for this unfair Procedure; which is, that whereas about an Age and an Half ago, all the poor Remains of Learning then in Being were in the Hands of the School-men, they would suffer none to pass Muster, that were not deeply engag'd in those intricate, vexatious and unintelligible Trifles, for which themselves contended with so much Noise and Heat; or at least were not acquainted with *Plato and Aristotle* and their Commentators; from

when

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whence the Sophistry and Subtleties of the Schools at that time were drawn. This Usurpation was maintain'd by their Successors the Divines, who to this Day pretend almost to the Monopoly of Learning; and though some generous Spirits have in good measure broke the Neck of this arbitrary, tyrannical Authority; yet can't they prevail to extend the Name of Learning beyond the Studies in which the Divines are more particularly conversant. Thus you shall never see them allow a Man to be a wise Man, a good Naturalist, a good Mathematician, Politician, or Poet, but no Scholar; a learned Man, that is no Philologer. For my Part, I think these Gentlemen have just inverted the Use of the Term, and given that to the Knowledge of Words, which belongs more properly to Things. I take Nature to be the great Book of universal Learning, which he that reads best in all, or any of its Parts, is the greatest Scholar, the most learned Man; and 'tis as ridiculous for a Man to count himself more learned than another, if he have no greater Extent

Extent of Knowledge of Things, because he is more vers'd in Languages as it would be for an old Fellow to tell a young one, his own Eyes were better than the other's, because he reads with Spectacles, the other without.

Thus, *Madam*, you see we may come in time to put in for Learning if we have a-mind, without falling under the Correction of Pedants. But I will let Learning alone at present because I have already banish'd it (tho' not out of Disrespect) from mix'd Conversation; to which we will return, and of which the greatest Magazines and Supports are still in Reserve: I mean the many excellent Authors of our own Country, whose Works it were endless to recount. Where is Love, Honour and Bravery more lively represented, than in our Tragedies? Who has given us nobler or juster Pictures of Nature, than Mr. *Shakespeare*? Where is there a tenderer Passion, than in the Maid's Tragedy? Whose Grief is more awful and commanding, than Mr. *Otway's*? Whose Descriptions more beautiful

or Thoughts more gallant, than Mr Dryden's? When I see any of their Plays acted, my Passions move by their Direction; my Indignation, my Compassion, my Grief, are all at their Beck. Nor is our Comedy at all inferior to our Tragedy; for, not to mention those already nam'd for the other Part of the Stage, who are all excellent in this too, Sir *George Etherege* and Sir *Charles Sedley*, for neat Raillery and Gallantry, are without Rivals; Mr. *Wycherley* for strong Wit, pointed Satyr, sound and useful Observations, is beyond Imitation; Mr. *Congreve*, for sprightly, genteel, easy Wit, falls short of no Man. These are the Masters of the Stage; but there are others, who, tho' of an inferior Class, yet deserve Commendation, were that at present my Business. Nay, even the worst of them afford us some Diversion; for I find a Sort of foolish Pleasure, and can laugh at Mr. *D——y's* Farce, as I do at the Tricks and Impertinences of a Monkey; and was pleas'd to see the Humour and Delight of the author in Mr. *H——n's* Eating and

F Drinking.

Drinking-Play, which I fancy'd was written in a Victualling-House. In short, were it not for the too great Frequency of loose Expressions, and wanton Images, I should take our Theatres for the best Schools in the World of Wit, Humanity, and Manners; which they might easily become, by retrenching that too great Liberty. Neither have the Poets only, but the Criticks too, endeavour'd to compleat us; Mr. *Pope* has, by his ingenious and judicious Labours, taught us to admire the Beauties as we ought, and to know the Faults of the former. Nor are we less beholden to the Criticks for forming our Judgments, than to the Poets for raising our Fancies.

These are the Sources from whence we draw our gayer Part of Conversation; I don't mean in Exclusion to the other Parts of Poetry, in most of which (as I have heard good Judges say) we equal at least the Ancients and far surpass all the Moderns. I am ravish'd with the Fancy of *Cowley* and the Gallantry of *Waller*; I reverence the *Fairy Queen*; am rais'd and elevated

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elevated with *Paradise Lost*; *Prince*
Arthur composes and reduces me to
 a State of yawning Indifference; and
 Mr. *W—fl—y's Heroicks* lull me to
 Sleep. Thus all Ranks and Degrees
 of Poets have their Use, and may be
 serviceable to some Body or other,
 from the Prince to the Pastry-Cook,
 or Past-board Box-maker. I should
 mention our Satyrists, but it would
 be endless to descend to every Parti-
 cular: Of these Mr. *Oldham* is admi-
 rable; and to go no farther, the in-
 imitable Mr. *Butler* will be an ever-
 lasting Testimony of the Wit of his
 Age and Nation, and bid eternal De-
 fiance to the Wits of all Countries,
 and future Ages, to follow him in a
 Path before untrack'd. Our Prose
 Writers, that are eminent for a gay
 Style and jovial Argument, are so
 many, that it would swell this Letter
 too much to name them; so that I
 shall only take Notice, that whoever
 can read without Pleasure or Laugh-
 ter, the *Contempt of the Clergy*, and
 the following Letters and Dialogues
 by the same Author, or the facetious
 Dialogues of Mr. *Brown*, must be

more splenetick than *Heraclitus*, or more stupid than the Ass he laugh'd at.

Nor are we less provided for the serious Part ; Morality has generally been the Province of our Clergy, who have treated of all Parts of it very largely with so much Piety, Solidity, and Eloquence, that, as I think, I may venture to say, they have written more upon it, than the Clergy of all the rest of the World ; so I believe No-body will deny that they have written better. Yet I could wish, that our ingenious Gentlemen wou'd employ their Pens oftner on these Subjects ; because the Severity of the other's Profession obliges them to write with an Air, and in a Style less agreeable and inviting to young People. Not that we are without many excellent Pieces of Morality, Humanity, and Civil Prudence, written by, and like, Gentlemen. But it is the Excellence of them, and the Ability of our Gentlemen, which appears in the Spirit, Wit, and curious Observations in those Pieces, which makes me desire more of the same Nature. Who can read the
much-

much-admir'd *Universal History*, written by the ingenious Dr. C——, Mr. S——, Mr. P——, Mr. C——, and others, the *Essays of Addison, Steel, Gay, Swift, Pope*, and Abundance of others, without wishing for more from the same or the like Hands? Our Neighbours the *French* have written a great deal of this Kind, of the best of which we have the Benefit in *English*; but more particularly Messieurs *Montagne, Rochesaucaut*, and *S. Evremont*, deserve to be immortal in all Languages. I need not mention any more, it is apparent from these, that Women want not the Means of being wise and prudent without more Tongues than one; nay, and learned too, if they have any Ambition to be so.

The numberless Treatises of Antiquities, Philosophy, Mathematicks, Natural and other History, in which I can't pass silently by that learned one of Sir *Walter Raleigh* (which the World he writ of can't match) written originally in, or translated to, our Tongue, are sufficient to lead us a great way into any Science our Cu-

riosity shall prompt us to. The greatest Difficulty we struggled with, was the Want of a good Art of Reasoning, which we had not, that I know of, till that Defect was supply'd by the greatest Master of that Art, Mr. *Locke*, whose *Essay on Human Understanding* makes large Amendments for the Want of all others in that Kind.

Thus, *Madam*, I have endeavour'd to obviate all our Adversaries Objections, by touching upon as great a Variety of Things relating to the Subject as I conveniently cou'd. Yet, I hope, I have troubled you with nothing but what was necessary, to make my Way clear and plain before me; and I am apt to think I have made it appear, that nothing but Discouragement, or an idle uncurious Humour, can hinder us from rivalling most Men in the Knowledge of great Variety of Things, without the Help of more Tongues than our own, which the Men so often reproachfully tell us is enough. This Idleness is but too frequently to be found among us; but 'tis a Fault equally common to both Sexes. Those

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that have Means to play the Fool all
 their Lives, seldom care for the Trou-
 ble of being made wise. We are na-
 turally Lovers of our Ease, and have
 great Apprehensions of the Difficulty
 of Things untry'd, especially in Mat-
 ters of Learning, the common Me-
 thods of acquiring which are so un-
 pleasant and uneasy. I doubt not
 but abundance of noble Wits are
 stifled in both Sexes, for want but of
 suspecting what they were able to do,
 and with how much Facility. Ex-
 perience shews us, every Day, Block-
 heads that arrive at a moderate, nay
 sometimes a great Reputation, by
 their Confidence and brisk Attempts,
 which they maintain by their Dili-
 gence; while great Numbers of Men,
 naturally more ingenious, lie neg-
 lected by, for want of Industry to
 improve, or Courage to exert them-
 selves. No Man certainly but wishes
 he had the Reputation in, and were
 respected and esteem'd by, the World,
 as he sees some Men are for the Fruits
 of their Pens; but they are loth to be
 at the Pains of an Attempt, or doubt
 their Sufficiency to perform; or,
 what

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what I believe is most general, never enquire so far into themselves, and their own Abilities, as to bring such a Thought into their Heads. This last, I fancy, is the true Reason why our Sex, who are commonly charged with talking too much, are guilty of writing so little. I wish they would shake off this lazy Despondence, and let the noble Examples of the deservedly celebrated Mrs. *Philips*, and the incomparable Mrs. *Behn* and Mrs. *Rowe*, rouse their Courages, and shew Mankind the great Injustice of their Contempt. I am confident they would find no such Need of the Assistance of Languages as is generally imagin'd. Those that have of their own, need not graft upon foreign Stocks. I have often thought, that the not teaching Women *Latin* and *Greek*, was an Advantage to them, if it were rightly consider'd, and might be improv'd to a great Height. For Girls, after they can read and write (if they be of any Fashion) are taught such Things as take not up their whole Time; and not being suffer'd to run about at Liberty as

Boys.

Boys, are furnish'd, among other Toys, with Books, such as *Romances*, *Novels*, *Plays*, and *Poems*; which, tho' they read carelessly, only for Diversion, yet, unawares to them, give them very early a considerable Command both of Words and Sense; which are farther improv'd by their making and receiving Visits with their Mothers, which gives them sometimes the Opportunity of imitating, conversing with, and knowing the Manner and Address of elder Persons. These I take to be the true Reasons why a Girl of Fifteen is reckon'd as ripe as a Boy of One and twenty, and not any natural Forwardness of Maturity, as some People would have it. These Advantages the Education of Boys deprives them of, who drudge away the Vigour of their Memories at Words, useless ever after to most of them, and at Seventeen or Eighteen are to begin their Alphabet of Sense, and are but where the Girls were at Nine or Ten: Yet because they have learnt *Latin* and *Greek*, reject with scorn all *English* Books, their best Helps, and lay aside their *Latin* ones,

as

as if they were already Masters of all that Learning, and so hoist Sail for the wide World, without a Compass to steer by. Thus I have fairly stated the Difference between us, and can find no such Disparity in Nature or Education, as they contend for: But we have a Sort of ungenerous Adversaries, that deal more in Scandal than Argument, and when they can't hurt us with their Weapons, endeavour to annoy us with Stink-Pots. Let us see therefore, *Madam*, whether we can't beat them from their Ammunition, and turn their own Artillery upon them; for I firmly believe there is nothing which they charge upon us, but may with more Justice be retorted upon themselves.

They tax us with a long List of Faults and Imperfections, and seem to have taken a Catalogue of their own Follies and Vices, not with design to correct them, but to shift off the Imputation to us. There is no Doubt, but particular Women may be found, upon whom every Charge may be justified; but our Sex is not answerable for them, till they prove
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There are no such Men, which will not be before Dooms-Day. However, like ill Neighbours, they bring the Dirt out of their own Homes, not out of Neatness, but out of Envy, from their Neighbours, at whose Doors they lay it. But let them remove their Follies as oft as they please, they are still as constant to them, as the *Needle* to the *North-Pole*; they point them out which Way soever they move. Let us see what these Qualities are they so liberally bestow upon us, and after see how they fit the Donors, and survey them in their proper Figures and Colours. The most Familiar of these are Vanity, Impertinence, Enviousness, Dissimulation, Inconstancy, &c.

To begin with Vanity; it is a Faulting the greatest Part of Mankind are infected with, more or less. For all Men are apt to flatter themselves with a Fancy, that they have some one or more good Qualities, or extraordinary Gifts, that raise them above the ordinary Level of Men; and therefore hug and cherish what they think valuable and singular in them.

It

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It is never commendable, sometimes pardonable, when the Excellencies are real, and it is moderate ; so much must be allow'd to humane Frailty. It is ridiculous and intolerable, when it is extravagant, misplac'd, and groundless. It is very injudicious and makes Men commonly dote on their Defects, and expose their Blemishes by their Fondness, which makes them more remarkable by the Care and Ornament bestow'd on them. It persuades hard favour'd and distorted Fellows to dress, and value their Persons ; Cowards to pretend to Courage, and provoke Beatings ; Blockheads to set up for Wit, and make themselves ridiculous in Print ; Upstarts to brag of their Families, and be reminded of the Garrets they were born, and the Stalls they were brought up in. In Women, the Object of it is their Beauty, and is excusable in those that have it. Those that have it not, may be pardon'd, if they endeavour at it ; because it is the only undisputed Advantage our Sex has over the other, and what makes them respected beyond all other

her Perfections, and is alone ador'd.
 Men, it has not only this Object,
 but all those before-mention'd, and
 hundred other. It is admirably
 in a Writing, reciting Fop Au-
 thor, and is in full Lustre in a Beau,
 but its most unlucky Prospect is in a
 wagging Coward, who is a Fool
 beyond the Conviction of Smart.
 His Courage is like an Ague Fit, that
 leaves him upon a Fright, and re-
 turns when he is out of the Reach of
 Cudgel. He spends much Time in
 the Fencing-School, and fights briskly
 where there is no Danger of Wounds
 or Smart. His Hands are instructed,
 but his Heels do him all the Service.
 He is a nice Observer of Punctilio's,
 and takes more Affronts than are gi-
 ven him. He draws first, and runs
 last; and if ever he makes another
 man run, it is after him. He is a
 pebble, and sparkles like a Diamond,
 but wants Hardness. He talks per-
 petually of what he will do, but
 thinks continually of what he shall
 suffer. He is often in Quarrels, yet
 seldom in Rencounters, and is glad
 of a Challenge, that he may know

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whom

whom and when to avoid. He brings up the Rear at an Engagement, and leads the Van in the Retreat. He is a Man of much Passion, but the most predominant is his Fear. He offers Affronts readily, but has too much Honour to justify them, and will submit to any Terms of Satisfaction, rather than occasion Bloodshed; and his *Sword* and *Person* are always at Leisure, and at your Service, till you want them; and then, to his great Trouble, he is always indispensably engag'd otherwise. He wears *Rings* and a long *Sword*, openly to shew his Valour; and *Mail*, privately to shew his Discretion. He threatens terribly; but he is like a Witch, if you draw Blood of him, he has no Power to hurt you. No Man shews or boasts more of his Scars, with less Reason. He scorns to take a Blow in the Face, and a Back-Piece is as good to him as a whole Suit of Armour. He is at first the Terror of all the young *Bullies*, at last the May-Game, and they blood the *Cub Hectors* upon him, as they do young *Beagles* on a *Hare*. Good

Usage

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Wage makes him insolent; but he owns, like a *Spaniel*, most upon those that beat him. When he is discover'd by all the rest of the World, the Cheat passes still upon himself, and he is pleas'd with the terrible figure he makes in his Glass, tho' he is ready to shake at his own shadow.

There are Men of a Humour directly opposite to this, yet every whit as mad, foolish, and vain; these are your Men of nice Honour, that love Fighting for the Sake of Blows, and are never well but when they are wounded; they are severe Interpreters of Looks, are affronted at every Face that don't please them, and, like true Cocks of the Game, have a Quarrel to all Mankind at first sight. They are passionate Admirers of scarr'd Faces, and dote on a wooden leg: They receive a Challenge like *Billet-Doux*, and a Home-thrust as Favour. Their common Adversary is the Constable, and their usual lodging the Compter. Broken Heads are a Diversion, and an Arm in a Scarf is a high Satisfaction. They

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are frugal in their Expences with the Taylor, for they have their Doublets pinkt on their Backs; but they are as good as an Annuity to the Surgeon tho' they need him not to let them bleed. *Flanders* is their Mistress and a Clap from her carries them off the Stage. If they return, an *Hospital* is their Retreat, or the *Sheriff* their Executor. These two, *Madam*, are very different Extravagances, and very strange ones; yet they are real and such as appear every Day: But what is most to be wonder'd at, arising both from the same Principle, and the same mistaken Notion, and are only differenc'd by the Diversity of Tempers in Men. The common Motive to both is Vanity, and they jointly concur in this Opinion, that Valour is the most estimable and most honourable Quality that Man is capable of; they agree in a Desire to be honour'd and fear'd, but they differ in their Methods in pursuing this common End. The one is naturally active, bold, and daring; and therefore takes the true Course to arrive at it by shewing what we can do, by

what

what he dare suffer ; and his immoderate Desire and Indiscretion, suffer him to know no Bounds. The other is mean-spirited and fearful, and seeks, by false Fire, to counterfeit a Heat that may pass for genuine, to conceal the Frost in his Blood, and, like an ill Actor, over-does his Part for want of understanding it ; which is impossible he should. Among peaceable Men, and those of his own Temper, he comes off with Colours flying, and those are the Men he would be valiant amongst only, cou'd he read Mens Hearts : But the first Encounter betrays the Afs through the Lion's Skin, and he is cudgel'd like an Afs in Spite of his Covering. It is our Happiness, *Madam*, that we lie under no manner of Temptation from these two Vanities, whereof one is so dangerous, the other so ridiculous. For all Humours that are forc'd against the natural Bent of our Tempers, must be so. Nature is our best Guide, and has fitted every Man for some Things more particularly than others ; which if they had the Sense to prosecute, they wou'd

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at least not be ridiculous, if they were not extraordinary. But so prevalent are our Vanity, and this apish Humour of Imitation, that we persuade ourselves that we may practise with Applause, whatever we see another succeed in; tho' as contrary to the Intent of our Nature, as Dancing to an Elephant. So some Men that talk well of serious Matters, are so mov'd at the Applause some merry Drolls gain, that they forget their Gravity, and aiming to be Wits, turn Buffoons. There are others, that are so taken with the Actions and Graces of a good Mimick, that they fall presently to making awkward Faces and wry Mouths, and are all their Lives after in a Vizor'd Mask tho' bare-fac'd.

These, and innumerable others of the like Nature, are the lesser Follies of Mankind, by which their Vanity makes them fit only to be laugh'd at. There are others, who by more studied and refin'd Follies arrive to be more considerable, and make a great Figure and Party among their Sex.

Of the first Rank of these is the *Beau*, who is one that has more Learning in his Heels than his Head, which is better cover'd than fill'd. His Taylor and his Barber are his Cabinet-Counsel, to whom he is more beholden for what he is, than to his Maker. He is one that has travell'd to see Fashions, and brought over with him the newest cut Suit, and the prettiest fancy'd Ribbons for Sword-Knots. His best Acquaintance at *Paris* was his Dancing-Master, whom he calls the *Marquis*, and his chief Visits to the Opera's. He has seen the *French King* once, and knows the Name of his Chief Minister, and is by this sufficiently convinc'd, that there are no Politicians in any other Part of the World. His Improvements are a nice Skill in the Mode, and a high Contempt of his own Country, and of Sense. All the Knowledge he has of the Country, or Manners of it, is in the keeping of the Valet that follow'd him hither; and all that he retains of the Language, is a few modish Words to lard his Discourse with, and shew his Breeding, and the Names of his

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his Garniture. He should be a Philosopher, for he studies nothing but himself; yet every one knows him better, that thinks him not worth knowing. His Looks and Gestures are his constant Lesson, and his Glass is the Oracle that resolves all his mighty Doubts and Scruples. He examines and refreshes his Complexion by it, and is more dejected at a Pimple, than if it were a Cancer. When his Eyes are set to a languishing Air, his Motions all prepar'd according to Art, his Wig and his Coat abundantly powder'd, his Gloves essenc'd, and his Handkerchief perfum'd, and all the rest of his Bravery rightly adjusted, the greatest Part of the Day, as well as the Business of it at Home, is over; 'tis time to launch and down he comes, scented like a Perfumer's Shop, and looks like a Vessel with all her Rigging under Sail, without Ballast. A Chair is brought within the Door, for he apprehends every Breath of Air as much as if it were a Hurricane. His first Visit is to the Chocolate-House, and after a Quarter of an Hour's Compli-

ment

ment to himself in the great Glass, he faces about and salutes the Company, and puts in Practice his Morning's Meditations. When he has made his Cringes round, and play'd over all his Tricks, out comes the fine *Snuff-Box*, and his *Nose* is regal'd while: After this he begins to open, and starts some learned Argument about the newest Fashion, and hence takes Occasion to commend the next Man's Fancy in his Cloaths. This affords in a Discourse of the Appearance last *Birth-Night*, or *Ball* at Court, and so a Critick upon this Lord, or that Lady's Masquing-Habit. From hence he adjourns to the *Play-House*, where he is to be met again in the Side-Box, from whence he makes his Court to all the Ladies in general with his Eyes, and is particular only with the *Orange-Wench*. After a while, he engages some neighbouring Vizor, and, together, they run over all the Boxes, and take to Pieces every Face, examine every Feature, pass their Censure upon every one, and so on to their Drefs. Here he very judiciously

ously gives his Opinion upon every Particular, and determines whose Colours are well chosen, whose Fancy is neatest, and whose Cloaths fit with most Air; but, in Conclusion, sees no Body compleat but himself in the whole House. After this he looks down with Contempt upon the Pit, and rallies all the slovenly Fellows, and awkward Beaus (as he calls them) of t'other End of the Town, is mightily offended at their ill-scented *Snuff*, and, in Spite of all his *Pulverio* and *Essences*, is overcome with the Stink of their *Cordovan Gloves*. To close all, Madam in the Mask must give him an Account of the Scandal of the Town which she does in the History of abundance of Intrigues, real or feign'd; at all which he laughs aloud and often, not to shew his Satisfaction, but his Teeth. She shews him who is kept by such a Lord; who was lately discarded by such a Knight, for granting Favours too indiscreetly to such a Gentleman who has lately been in the Country for two or three Months upon extraordinary

ordinary Occasions. To all which he gives great Attention, that he may pass for a Man of Intelligence in another Place. His next Stage is *Locket's*, where his Vanity, not his Stomach, is to be gratified with something that is little and dear; *Quails* and *Ortans* are the meanest of his Diet, and a Spoonful of *Green Pease* at *Christmas* is worth to him more than the Inheritance of the *Field* where they grow in *Summer*. Every thing falls in his Esteem, as it falls in Price; and he would not so much as taste the *Wine*, if the hard Name, and the high Rate, did not give it a Relish. After a Glass or two (for a Pint is his stint) he begins to talk of his Intrigues, boasts much of the Favours he has receiv'd, shews counterfeit Tokens, and, in Conclusion, flanders some Lady or other of unquestion'd Virtue with a particular Fondness for him. His Amours are all profound secrets, yet he makes a Confidence of them to every Man he meets with. He pretends a great Reverence for the Ladies, and a mighty Tenderness of their Reputations; yet he is like

a *Flesh-Fly*, whatever he blows on is tainted. He talks of nothing under Quality, tho' he never obtain'd a Favour which his Man might not have for Half a Crown. He and his Footman, in this Case, are like *English* and *Dutch* at an Ordinary in *Holland*: the Fare is the same, but the Price is vastly different. Thus the Sheriff goes forward, till he is beaten for Trespases he was never guilty of, and shall be damn'd for Sins he never committed. At last, with his Credit as low as his Fortune, he retires suddenly to his Cloister, the *King's-Bench* or *Fleet*, and passes the rest of his Days in Privacy and Contemplation. Here, *Madam*, if you please we'll give him one *Visit* more, and see the last *Act* of the *Farce*, and you shall find him (whose Sobriety was become a *Vice*, as being only the *Pimp* to his other *Pleasures*, and who fear'd a lighted *Pipe* as much as if it had been a great *Gun* levell'd at him) with his *Nose* flaming, and his *Breath* stinking of Spirits worse than a *Dutch Tar-pawlin's*, and smoaking out of a short *Pipe*, that for some Months has been

been kept hot as constantly as a *Glass-House*; and so I leave him to his Meditation.

You wou'd think it yet more strange, that any one should be *slovenly* and *nasty* out of *Vanity*; yet such there are, I can assure you, *Madam*, and cou'd easily give a Description of them; but that so foul a Relation must needs be nauseous to a person so neat as yourself, and wou'd be treating You as the *Country Squire* and his *Court Friend*, who, when he had shew'd him all the Curiosities of his House and Gardens, carried him to his Hogsties. But there are more than enough to justify what I have said of the Humour of *Diogenes*, who was as vain and proud in his *Tub*, as *Plato* cou'd be in the Midst of his fine *Persian Carpets*, and rich *Furniture*. Vanity is only an Ambition of being taken Notice of, which shews itself variously, according to the Humour of the Persons; which was more extravagant in the *Anti-Beau*, than in the *Beau-Philosopher*. Vanity is the *chief Proteus* in the World; it can be *Humility*, and can make Men de-

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cry

cry themselves on purpose to be flatter'd ; like some cunning *Preachers* that cry up *Mortification* and *Self-denial* perpetually, and are pamper'd all the while by the Zeal, and at the Charges, of their Followers, who are afraid the good Man shou'd starve himself. It is the Blessing of Fools and the Folly of ingenious Men. For it makes those contentedly hug themselves under all the Scorn of the World, and the Indignities that are offer'd them ; and these restless and dissatisfied with its Applause. Both think the World envious, and that their Merit is injur'd, and it is impossible to right either of them to the Minds ; for those have no Title to the Pretence of Merit, and these not so much as they think they have. Yet it is the Happiness of the first that they can think themselves capable of moving *Envy* ; for though they commonly mistake the Derision of Men for their Applause, yet Men are sometimes so ill-natur'd as to undeceive them ; and then it is their Comfort that these are envious Men, and may represent the World's Opinion

them

hem. Cou'd these Men be convinc'd of their Mistake, I see nothing that wou'd hinder them from being desperate, and hanging or disposing of themselves some other such way. For though a Man may comfort himself under Afflictions, it is either that they are undeserved ; or, if deserved, that he suffers only for Over-sights, or rash Acts, by which the wisest Man may be sometimes overtaken ; that he is in the main discreet and prudent, and that others believe him so. But when a Man falls under his own *Contempt*, and does not only think himself not wise, but by *Nature* made absolutely incapable of ever becoming *wise*, he is in a deplorable *State*, and wants the common *Comfort*, as well of *Fools* as *wise Men*, *Vanity* ; which in such a Case is the only proper *Mediator* of a *Reconcilement*. No *Quality* seems to be more providentially distributed to every Man according to his *Necessity* ; for those that have least *Wit*, ought to have the greatest *Opinion* of it ; as all other *Commodities* are rated highest where they are scarcest. By this

Means, the Level is better maintain'd amongst Men, who, were this imaginary Equality destroy'd, might be apt to reverence and idolize one another too much, and (forgetting the common Fate they are all born to pay Honours too near Divine to their Fellow Mortals. But as the Humour of the World now runs, this Sort of *Idolatry* is scarce likely to come into Fashion. We have too great an Opinion of ourselves, to believe too well of any one else, and we are in nothing more difficult than in Points of Wit and Understanding; in either of which we very unwillingly yield the Preference to any Man. There is nothing of which we affect to speak with more Humility and Indifference than our own Sense; yet nothing of which we think with more Partiality and Presumption. There have been some so bold, as to assume the Title of the *Oracles of Reason* to themselves and their own Writings; and we meet with others daily, that think themselves *Oracles of Wit*. These are the most vexatious Animals in the World that think they have a Privilege to torment

torment and plague every Body, but those most who have the best Reputation for their Wit or Judgment; as Fleas are said to molest those most who have tenderest *Skins*, and the sweetest *Blood*.

Of these, the most voluminous Fool is the Fop-Poet, who is one that has always more Wit in his Pockets than any where else, yet seldom or never any of his own there. *Esop's Dwarf* was a *Type* of him; for he makes himself fine with the Plunder of all Parties. He is a Smuggler of Wit, and steals *French Fancies*, without paying the customary Duties. Verse is his *Manufacture*; for it is more the Labour of his Finger than his Brain. He spends much Time in Writing, but ten times more in Reading what he has written. He is loaden constantly with more Papers, and duller, than a *Clerk in Chancery*, and spends more Time in *Hearings* and *Rehearings*. He asks your Opinion; yet for fear you shou'd not jump with him, tells you his own first. He desires no Favour, yet is disappointed if he be not flatter'd; and is offended always at

the Truth. His first Education is generally a *Shop* or a *Counting-House*, where his Acquaintance commences with the *Bell-Man* upon a New-year's-day. He puts him upon Intriguing with the *Muses*, and promises to *pimp* for him. From this time forward he hates the Name of *Mechanick*, and resolves to sell all his Stock, and purchase a Plantation in *Parnassus*. He is now a poetical *Haberdasher* of *Small Wares*, and deals very much in *Novels*, *Madrigals*, *Riddles*, *Funerals*, and *Love-Odes*, and *Elegies*, and other Toys from *Helicon*, which he has a Shop so well furnish'd with, that he can fit you with all Sorts and Sizes upon all Occasions, in the Twinkling of an Eye. He frequents *Apollo's Exchange* in *Covent-Garden*, and picks up the freshest Intelligence what *Plays* are upon the Stocks, or ready to be launch'd; who have lately made a good Voyage, who a saving one only, and who have suffer'd a Wreck in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, or *Drury-Lane*, and which are brought into the Dock to be careen'd, and fitted for another Voyage. He talks much

much of *Dryden*, *Wycherley*, and *Shakepear*, and the rest of that Sett, and protests he can't help having some respect for them. Once a Month he puts out a small *Poetical Smack*, at the charge of his Bookseller, which he loads with *French Plunder*, new-empt in *English*, small Ventures of *translated Odes*, *Elegies*, and *Epigrams* of young Traders, and ballasts with heavy *Prose* of his own; for which Returns are to be made to the several Owners in Testers, or Applause from the 'Prentices and Tire-Women that deal for them. He is the Oracle of those that want Wit, and the Plague of those that have it; for he haunts their Lodgings, and is more terrible to them than their Duns. His Pocket is an unexhaustible Magazine of *Rhime* and *Nonsense*, and his Tongue, like a repeating Clock with Chimes, is ready upon every Touch to sound to them. Men avoid him for the same Reason they avoid the *Pillory*, the Security of their *Ears*; of which he is as merciless a Prosecutor. He is the Bane of Society, a Friend to the Stationers, the

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the Plague of the Press, and the Ruin of his Bookseller. He is more profitable to the *Grocers* and *Tobacconists* than the *Paper Manufacture*; for his Works, which talk so much of Fire and Flame, commonly expire in the Shops in *Vapour* and *Smoak*. If he aspire to *Comedy*, he intrigues with some experienc'd *Damsel* of the *Town* in order to instruct himself in the Humour of it, and is cullied by her into *Matrimony*, and so is furnish'd once with a Plot, and two good Characters, himself and his Wife, and paid with a Portion for a Jointure in *Parnassus*, which I leave him to make his best of.

I shall not trouble you with any more Instances of the foolish Vanities of Mankind; because I am afraid I have been too large upon that Head already. Not that I think there is any Order or Degree of Men, which wou'd not afford many and notorious Instances for our Purpose. For, as I think *Vanity* almost the universal Mover of all our Actions, whether good or bad; so I think there are scarce any Men so ingenious, or so virtuous

virtuous, but something of it will shine through the greatest Part of what they do, let them cast never so thick a Veil over it. What makes Men so solicitous of leaving a Reputation behind them in the World, tho' they know they can't be affected with it after Death, but this, even to a Degree of Folly? What else makes great Men involve themselves in the fatigues and Hazards of War, and intricate Intrigues of State, when they have already more than they can enjoy. but an Itch of being talk'd of and remember'd, to which they sacrifice their present Happiness and Repose?

But I shall carry these Considerations no farther; because I have already singled out some of those many, whose *Vanity* is more extravagant and ridiculous, than any our Sex is chargeable with: These slight Touches may serve to let them see that even the greatest and wisest are not wholly exempt, if they have it not in a higher Degree, tho' they exercise it in things more popular and plausible. I hope therefore the Burden of this
good

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good Quality will not hereafter be laid upon us alone, but the Men will be contented to divide the Load with us, and be thankful that they bear less than their Proportion.

Impertinence comes next under Consideration, in which I shall be as brief as I conveniently can, in regard I have been so long upon the preceding Head. *Impertinence* is a Humour of busying ourselves about things trivial and of no Moment in themselves, or unseasonably in things of no Concern to us, or wherein we are able to do nothing to any Purpose. Here our Adversaries insult over us, as if they had gain'd an entire *Victory*, and the *Field* were indisputable; but they shall have no Cause for *Triumph*, there is no Post of such mighty Advantage as they fondly persuade themselves. This *Presumption* arises from an erroneous Conceit, that all those things in which they are little concern'd or consulted, are Trifles below their Care or Notice, which indeed they are not by Nature so well able to manage. Thus, when they hear us talking to, and advising one another about

out the Order, Distribution and Con-
 vivance, of *Household Affairs*, about
 the Regulation of the *Family*, and
 Government of *Children* and *Servants*,
 the provident Management of a *Kit-*
chen, and the decent Ordering of a
Table, the suitable Matching and con-
 venient Disposition of *Furniture*, and
 the like; they presently condemn us
 for Impertinence. Yet they may be
 pleased to consider, that as the Af-
 fairs of the World are now divided
 betwixt us, the *Domestick* are our
 share, and out of which we are rarely
 suffer'd to interpose our Sense. They
 may be pleased to consider likewise,
 that, as light and inconsiderable as
 these things seem, they are capable
 of no Pleasures of Sense higher, or
 more refin'd, than others of *Brutes*,
 without our Care of them. For were
 it not for that, their Houses wou'd be
 meer *Bedlams*; their most luxurious
 Treats, but a rude Confusion of ill-
 digested, ill-mixed, Scents and Re-
 lishes; and the fine Furniture they
 bestow so much Cost on, but an ex-
 pensive Heap of glittering *Rubbish*.
 Thus they are beholden to us for the
 comfort-

comfortable Enjoyment of what the Labour or good Fortune hath acquired or bestow'd, and think meanly of our Care, only because they understand not the Value of it. But if we should be thought impertinent for Discourse of this Nature, as I deny not but we sometimes justly may, when they are unseasonable; what Censure must those Men bear, who are perpetually talking of *Politicks, State-Affairs, and Grievances*, to us, in which perhaps neither they nor we are much concerned; or if we be, are not able to propose, much less to apply, any Remedy to them? Surely these are impertinent. Not to call the *Beast* or *Poetaster* on the *Stage* again, whose whole Lives are one continued Scene of Folly and Impertinence, let us make the best of our *News-Monger*.

He is one whose Brains having been once over-heated, retain something of the Fire in them ever after. He mistakes his Passion for Zeal, and his Noise and Bustling for Services. He is always full of Doubts, Fears, and Jealousies, and is never without some notable Discovery of a deep-laid Design,

ign, or a dangerous Plot found out
 in a *Meal-Tub* or *Petticoat*. He is a
 mighty Listner after *Prodigies*, and
 ever hears of a *Whale*, or a *Comet*,
 but he apprehends some sudden *Re-*
volution in the State, and looks upon
Groaning-Board, or a *Speaking-Head*,
 as Forerunners of the *Day of Judgment*.
 He is a great Lover of the King, but
 a bitter Enemy to all about him, and
 thinks it impossible for him to have
 any but *evil Counsellors*; and though
 he be very zealous for the Govern-
 ment, yet he never finds any thing
 in it but *Grievances* and *Miscarriages*
 to declaim upon. He is a Well-wisher
 to the *Church*, but he is never to be
 reconcil'd to the *Bishops* and *Clergy*,
 and rails most inveterately at the *Act*
of Uniformity. He hates *Persecution*
 implacably, and contends furiously
 for *Moderation*, and can scarce think
 well of the *Toleration*, because it is
 an Act of the State. He professes
 himself of the *Church of England*,
 pretends to like the Worship of it;
 but he goes to Meetings in Spite to
 the *Parson* of his *Parish*. His *Con-*
science is very tender and scrupulous

in Matters of Ceremony, but it is as
steely and touchy as Brawn behind
his Counter, and can digest any Sin
of Gain. He lodges at Home, but
he lives at the *Coffee-House*. He con-
verses more with *News-Papers*, *Ga-
zettes* and *Votes*, than with his *Shop-
Books*; and his constant Application
to the *Publick*, takes him off of all
Care for his *Private Concerns*. He
always settling the *Nation*, yet could
never manage his own *Family*. He
is a mighty Stickler at all *Elections*
and, tho' he has no *Vote*, thinks it
impossible any thing shou'd go right
unless he be there to Bawl for it.
His Business is at *Home*, but his
Thoughts are in *Flanders*, and he
earnestly investing of Towns, till the
Sheriff's Officers beleagure his Door.
He is busy in forcing of *Counterscarps*
and storming of *Breaches*, while his
Creditors take his *Shop* by Surprise
and make Plunder of his *Goods*.
Thus, by mending the *State*, he
marrs his own *Fortune*; and never
leaves talking of the *Laws* of the
Land, till the Execution of them sil-
lence him.

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This Sort of Impertinents the *Coffee-Houses* are every Day full of; nay, so far has this contagious Impertinence spread itself, that *private Houses* and *Shops*, nay, the very *Streets* and *Bulks*, are infected and pepper'd with Politicks and News. Not a Pot cou'd go glibly down, or a Stitch go merrily forward, without *Cape-Breton* or *Bergen-op-zoom*, a while ago. But those that have better Knowledge of Things, have no such Plea; they ought to have been wiser, than to have busied themselves so much and so earnestly about Affairs, which all their Care and Solitude could have no more Influence upon, than over the Weather. 'Twas pleasant to see what Shoals the Report of the Arrival of a *Holland* or *Flanders* Mail brought to the *Secretary's Office*, the *Post-Office*, and the *Coffee-House*; every one crowding to catch the News first, which as soon as they had, they posted away like so many Expresses to disperse it among their Neighbours at more Distance, that waited with Ears prickt up to receive them, or walk'd uneasily with a foolish

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Impatience to or from the Door or Window, as if their looking out often wou'd fetch them the sooner. Most Men in their News are like *Beaus* in their Diet ; the worst is welcome while 'tis fresh and scarce, and the best is not worth a Farthing when it has been blown upon ; and commonly they fare like *Beaus*, are fond of it while 'tis young and insipid, and neglect it when 'tis grown up to its full and true Relish. No sooner is it rumour'd that a Breach is made in the *Castle-Wall*, or the *White Flag* hung out, but a *Council of War* is call'd in every *Coffee-House* in Town ; the *French* and *Dutch Prints*, their Intelligences, are call'd for immediately and examin'd ; and not a Shot is mention'd, but they start as if the Ball whizz'd just then by their Ears. After this follows a serious Debate about a General Assault, and whether they shall storm immediately, or not ; who shall begin the Attack ; what Conditions shall be granted on Capitulation. *Cape-Breton* is taken, or surrender'd they proceed to take their Measures and settle the next Campaign.

campaign; and whatever Harm we suffer
 by those mischievous *French* in the
 Field, they are sure to take sufficient
 Revenge, and pay them off swing-
 ingly in the *Coffee-House*. But as if
 this were not enough, our greatest
 Actions must be buffoon'd in Shew,
 as well as Talk. Shall *Cape-Breton*
 be taken, and our Heroes of the
 City not shew their Prowess upon
 so great an Occasion? It must never
 be said, that the *Coffee-Houses* dar'd
 more than *Moor-Fields*: No, for
 the Honour of *London*, out comes
 the Foreman of the *Shop*, very for-
 midable in *Buff* and *Bandileers*, and
 away he marches, with Feather in
 Cap, to the General Rendezvous in
 the *Artillery Ground*. There these
 terrible Mimicks of *Mars* are to
 spend their Fury in *Noise* and *Smoke*.
 against a *Mole-bill*, and by the Help of
Guns and *Drums* out-stink and out-
 rattle *Smithfield* in all its Bravery,
 and wou'd be too hard for the greatest
 Man in all *France*, if they had him
 sent amongst them. Yet this is but
 skirmishing, the hot Service is in
 another Place, when they engage the

Capons and *Quart Pots*; never was Onset more vigorous, for they come to Handy-Blows immediately, and now is the real Cutting and Slashing and Tilting without Quarter. Were the Towns in *Flanders* all wall'd with *Beef*, and the *French* as good Meat as *Capons*, and dress'd the same Way, the King need never beat his Drum for Soldiers; all these gallant Fellows wou'd come in voluntarily, the meanest of which would be able to eat a *Mareschal*, and whom nothing cou'd oppose in Conjunction.

Nothing is more common and familiar than this Sort of Impertinence. Most Men wou'd have little to do, did they busy themselves about nothing, but what they understand or were concern'd in. A Monkey is not liker a Man in his Figure, than in his Humour. How ready are all Mankind to censure without Authority, and to give Advice unask'd, and without Reason? They are very much mistaken, that think this Forwardness to thrust themselves into others Affairs, springs from any Principle of Charity or Tenderneſs

of

of them, or the least Regard to the
 Welfare of their Neighbours: 'Tis
 only a vain Conceit, that they are
 wiser, and more able to advise, which
 puts them upon engaging in things
 they have nothing to do with, and
 passing their Judgments magisterially
 on Matters they have no Cognizance
 of, and generally little Information
 or Skill in. They are desirous the
 World shou'd have as great an O-
 pinion of them, as they have of
 themselves, and therefore imperti-
 nently interpose their own Authority
 and Sense, tho' never so little to the
 Purpose, only to shew how well they
 cou'd manage, were it their Business.
 Thus they advise without good Inten-
 tion or Kindness, and censure with-
 out Design or Malice to the Persons
 counsell'd or reflected on. These buz-
 zing Insects swarm as thick every
 where, and are as troublesome as
 Moskettoes in the *West-Indies*. They
 are perpetually in a Hurry of Busi-
 ness, yet are forc'd to rack their In-
 ventions to employ their Leisure.
 They are very busy for every Body,
 and serve no Body. They are always
 in

in Haſte, and think themſelves expected every where with Impatience yet come ſooner always than they are welcome. They will walk Mile, and ſpend an Hour to tell any one how urgent their Buſineſs is, and what Haſte they are in to be gone. Their Expedition is their greateſt Loſs, for Time is the only thing that lies heavy upon their Hands. They are walking *Gazettes*, that carry News from one Neighbour to another, and have their Stages about the Town as regular and certain as a *Penny-Post-Man*. Every Man is their Acquaintance, but no Man their Friend. They drudge for every Body, and are paid by no Body; and though their Lives be worne out in Endeavours to oblige all Mankind, when they die no one regrets their Loſs, or miſſes their Service.

There are another Sort of Imperitents, who, as they mind not the Buſineſs of other Men where it concerns them not, neglect it likewise where it does, and amuſe themſelves continually with the Contemplation of thoſe things, which the reſt of the World

World flight as useless, and below their Regard. Of these, the most egregious is the *Virtuoso*, who is one that has sold an Estate in Land, to purchase one in *Scallop, Conch, Mussle, Cockle-Shells, Periwinkles, Sea-Grubs, Weeds, Mosses, Sponges, Corals, Coralines, Sea-Fans, Pebbles, Marchanties*, and *Flint-Stones*; and has abandon'd the Acquaintance and Society of Men, for that of Insects, *Worms, Grubs, Maggots, Flies, Moths, Locusts, Beetles, Spiders, Grasshoppers, Snails, Lizards* and *Tortoises*. His Study is like *Noah's Ark*, the general Rendezvous of all Creatures in the *Universe*, and the greatest Part of his Moveables are the Remainders of his Deluge. His Travels are not design'd as Visits to the Inhabitants of any Place, but to the Pits, Shores and Hills; from whence he fetches not the Treasure, but the Trumpery. He is ravish'd at finding an uncommon Shell, or an odd-shap'd Stone, and is desperately enamour'd at first Sight of an unusual mark'd Butterfly, which he will hunt a whole Day to be Master of. He trafficks to all Places, and has his

Corres-

Correspondents in every Part of the World; yet his Merchandizes serve not to promote our Luxury, nor increase our Trade, and neither enrich the Nation, nor himself. A Box of two of *Pebbles* or *Shells*, and a Dozen of *Wasps*, *Spiders* and *Caterpillars*, are his Cargo. He values a *Camelion*, or *Salamander's Egg*, above all the *Sugars* and *Spices* of the *West* and *East Indies*, and would give more for the Shell of a *Star-Fish*, or *Sea-Urchin* entire, than for a whole *Dutch Herring Fleet*. He visits *Mines*, *Coal-Pits* and *Quarries* frequently, but not for that sordid End that other Men usually do, viz. *Gain*; but for the Sake of the *Fossil Shells* and *Teeth*, that are sometimes found there. He is a Smatterer at *Botany*; but for fear of being suspected of any useful Design by it, he employs his Curiosity only about *Mosses*, *Grasses*, *Brakes*, *Thistles*, &c. that are not accus'd of any Virtue in *Medicine*, which he distinguishes and divides very nicely. He preserves carefully those *Creatures* which other Men industriously destroy; and cultivates sedulously those

Plants.

plants, which others root up as
 seeds. He is the Embalmer of de-
 cas'd Vermin, and dresses his Mum-
 mies with as much Care, as the an-
 cient *Egyptians* did their Kings. His
 Cash consists much in old Coins, and
 he thinks the Face of *Alexander* in one
 of them worth more than all his Con-
 quests. His Inventory is a List of the
 insects of all Countries, and the Shells
 and Pebbles of all Shores, which can
 be more complete, without two or
 three remarkable *Signatures*, than an
 Apothecary's Shop without a *Tortoise*
 and a *Grocodile*, or a Country Barber's
 without a batter'd *Cistern*. A Piece
 of Ore with a Shell in it, is a greater
 Present than if it were fine Gold,
 and a String of *Wampompeag* is re-
 ceiv'd with more Joy than a *Rope* of
Orient Pearl, or *Diamonds*, wou'd be.
 His Collection of *Garden-Snails*,
Cockle-Shells, and *Vermin* compleated
 (as he thinks) he sets up for a *Philo-*
sopher, and nothing less than Uni-
 versal Nature will serve for a Sub-
 ject, of which he thinks he has an
 entire History in his *Lumber-Office*.
 Henceforward he *struts* and *swells*,
 and

and despises all those little insignificant Fellows, that can make no better use of those noble incontestable Evidences of the Universal Deluge, *Scallop and Oyster-Shells*, than to stew *Oysters*, or melt *Brimstone* for *Matches*. By this time he thinks it necessary to give the World an *Essay* of his Parts, that it may think as highly of them (if possible) as he does himself; and finding *Moses* hard beset of late, he resolves to give him a Lift, and defend his Flood, to which he is so much oblig'd for sparing his darling Toys only. But, as great Masters use, he corrects him sometimes for not speaking to his Mind, and gives him the Lye now and then, in order to support his Authority. He shakes the World to Atoms with ease, which melts before him as readily as if it were nothing but a Ball of Salt. He pumps even the Center, and drains it of imaginary Stores by imaginary Loop-Holes, as if punching the Globe full of Holes cou'd make his *Hypothesis* hold Water. He is a Man of *Expedition*, and does that in a few Days which cost *Moses* some Months to compleat.

compleat. He is a passionate Admirer of his own Works, without a Rival, and superciliously contemns all *Answers*; yet the least Objection throws him into the Vapours. He sets up for a grand *Philosopher*, and utters *Hypotheses* upon the World, which future Ages may (if they please) expect to hear his Arguments for: At present he is in no Humour to give them any other Satisfaction, than his own Word, that he is infallible. Yet those that have a Faith complacent enough to take a Gentleman's Word for his own great Abilities, may perhaps be admitted to Sight of his grand Demonstration, his *Raree-Show*; the Particulars of which he repeats to them in a whining *Tone*, every whit as formal and merry, though not so musical, as the fellows that used formerly to carry theirs at their *Backs*. His ordinary Discourse is of his *Travels under Ground*, in which he has gone farther (if he may be believ'd) than a whole Warren of *Coneys*. Here he began his Collection of Furniture for his Philosophical *Toy-Shop*, which he will

conclude with his Fortune, and then, like all Flesh, revert to the Place from whence he came, and be translated only from one Shop to another.

This, *Madam*, is another Sort of Impertinence our Sex are not liable to; one would think that none but *Madmen*, or highly *Hypochondriacal*, cou'd employ themselves at this rate. I appeal to you, or indeed to any Man of Sense, whether acts like the wiser Animal; the Man that with great Care and Pains distinguishes and divides the many Varieties of Grass, and finds no other Fruit of his Labour, than the charging of his Memory with Abundance of superfluous Names; or the Ass, that eats all promiscuously, and without Distinction, to satisfy his *Appetite*, and support *Nature*? To what Purpose is it that these Gentlemen ransack all Parts both of *Earth* and *Sea* to procure these *Trifles*? It is only that they may give their Names to some yet unchristen'd Shell or Insect. I know that the Desire of Knowledge, and the Discovery of things yet unknown, is the Pretence; but what Knowledge

is it? What Discoveries do we owe to their Labours? It is only the Discovery of some few unheeded Varieties of Plants, Shells, or Insects, unheeded only because useless; and the Knowledge they boast so much of, is no more than a Register of their Names, and Marks of Distinction only. It is enough for them to know that a *Silk-Worm* is a Sort of *Caterpillar*; that, when it is come to Maturity, weaves a *Web*, is metamorphos'd to a *Moth-Fly*, lays Eggs, and so dies. They leave all further Enquiry to the Unlearned and Mechanicks, whose Business only they think it to prosecute Matters of Gain and Profit. Let them contrive, if they can, to make this *Silk* serviceable to *Mankind*; their *Speculations* have another Scope, which is the founding some wild, uncertain, conjectural *Hypothesis*, which may be true or false, yet *Mankind* neither Gainers nor Losers either way a Tittle in Point of *Wisdom* or *Convenience*. These Men are just the Reverse of a *Rattle-Snake*, and carry in their *Heads* what he does

in his *Tail*, and move Laughter rather than Regard. What Improvements of *Physick*, or any useful Arts; what noble Remedies, what serviceable Instruments, have these *Musbrooms* and *Cockle-Shell* Hunters oblig'd the World with? For I am ready to recant, if they can shew so good a Medicine as stew'd *Prunes*, or so necessary an Instrument as a *Fly-Flap*, of their own Invention and Discovery. Yet these are the Men of exalted Understandings, the Men of elevated Capacities and sublime Speculations, that dignify and distinguish themselves from the rest of the World by specious Names and pompons Titles, and continue notwithstanding as very *Reptiles* in Sense, as those they converse so much with.

I would not have any Body mistake me so far, as to think I would in the least reflect upon any sincere and intelligent Enquirer into Nature, of which I as heartily wish a better Knowledge as any *Virtuoso* of them all. You can be my Witness, *Madam*, that I us'd to say, I thought Mr. *Boyle* more honourable for his
learned

learned Labours, than for his noble Birth; and that the *Royal Society*, by their great and celebrated Performances, were an illustrious Argument of the Wisdom of the *August Prince*, their Founder, of happy Memory; and that they highly merited the *Esteem, Respect*, and *Honour*, paid them by the Lovers of Learning all Europe over. But tho' I have a very great Veneration for the *Society* in general, I can't but put a vast Difference between the particular Members that compose it. Were *Supererogation* a Doctrine in Fashion, 'tis probable some of them might borrow of their Fellows Merit enough to justify their Arrogance: But, alas, they are come an Age too late for that Trick; they are fallen into a faithless incredulous Generation of Men, that will give Credit no farther than the visible Stock will extend: And tho' a *Virtuoso* should swell a Title-Page even till it burst with large Promises, and sonorous Titles, the World is so ill-natur'd as not to think a whit the better of a Book for it. No sooner now-a-days can a Man

write or steal an Hypothesis, and promise Demonstration for it hereafter, in this or the next World, but out comes some malicious Answer or other, with Reasons in Hand against it, overthrows the Credit of it, and puts the poor Author into Fits. For tho' a great Philosopher, that has written a Book of Three Shillings, may reasonably insult and despise a Sixpenny Answer, yet the Indignity of so low-pric'd a Refutation would make a *Stoick* fret, and *frisk* like a Cow with a Breeze in her Tail, or a Man bitten by a *Tarantula*. Men measure themselves by their *Vanity*, and are greater or less in their own Opinions, according to the Proportion they have of it; if they be well stock'd with it, it may be easy to confute, but impossible to convince them. He therefore that would set up for a great Man, ought first to be plentifully provided of it, and then a Score of *Cockle-Shells*, a Dozen of *Hodmandods*, or any Trifle else, is sufficient Foundation to build a Reputation upon. But if a Man shall abdicate his lawful Calling in pure Affection

Affection to these things, and has for some Years spent all the Time and Money he was Master of in Prosecution of this Passion, and shall after all hear his *Caterpillars* affronted, and his *Butterflies* irreverently spoken of, it must be more provoking to him, than 'tis to a *Lion* to be pull'd by the *Beard*. And if, when to crown all his Labours, he has discover'd a Water so near a-kin to the famous one, that cou'd be kept in nothing but the Hoof of an *Ass*, that it was never found but in the *Skull* of the same *Animal*; a Water that makes no more of melting a *World*, than a *Dutchman* does of a *Firkin* of *Butter*; and when he has written a Book of Discoveries and Wonders thereupon; if (I say) the impertinent Scribblers of the Age will still be demanding *Proofs*, and writing *Answers*, he has Reason to throw down his *Pen* in a Rage, and pronounce the World, that could give him such an Interruption, unworthy to be bless'd with his future Labours, and breathe eternal Defiance to it, as irreconcilable as the Quarrel of the Sons of *OEdipus*. To
which

which prudent Resolution, let us leave him till he can recover his Temper.

These Instances, *Madam*, will (I hope) suffice to shew that Men are themselves altogether as impertinent as they maliciously misrepresent us. It is not for want of Plenty of others that I content myself with these; but I am not willing to trouble you with any of an inferior Character. There are all Impertinents of *Mark and Note*, and have severally the good Fortune to find Crowds of *Fools* of their own Sex to applaud and admire them. *Impertinence* is a Failing that has its *Root in Nature*; but is not worth laughing at, till it has received the finishing Strokes of Art. A Man through natural Defects may do a bundance of incoherent, foolish Actions, yet deserve *Compassion and Advice*, rather than *Derision*. But to see Men spending their Fortunes, as well as Lives, in a Course of *regular Folly* and with an industrious as well as expensive Idleness, running through tedious *Systems* of Impertinence, would have split the Sides of *Heracles*.

tas,

had it been his Fortune to have been a Spectator. 'Tis very easy to decide which of these *Impertinents* is the most signal; the *Vertuoso* is manifestly without a Competitor. For our Follies are not to be measur'd by the Degree of *Ignorance* that appears in them, but by the Study, Labour and Expence they cost us to finish and compleat them. So that the more Regularity and Artifice there appears in any of our Extravagancies, the greater the Folly of them. Upon this Score it is, that the last-mention'd deserv'dly claim the Preference to all others; they have improv'd so well their Amusements into an Art, that the *Credulous* and *Ignorant* are induc'd to believe there is some secret Virtue, some hidden Mystery in those darling Toys of theirs; when all their Busting amounts to no more than a learned *Impertinence* (for so they abuse the Term) and all they teach Men is but a specious expensive Method of throwing away both Time and Money.

I intend not in what remains to trouble you with any more such Instances;

stances; because I am sensible these have already swell'd this *Letter* to a *Volume*, which was not at first my Intent. I shall therefore dispatch the remaining Part of the Charge in a few Words as possible. Amongst the rest, *Disimulation* is none of the least *Blemishes*, which they endeavour to fix upon us. This Quality, tho' it can't upon any Occasion deserve the Name of a *Virtue*, yet, according to the present Constitution of the World, is many times absolutely necessary, and is a main Ingredient in the Composition of human Prudence. It is indeed oftentimes criminal, but it is only accidentally so, as Industry, Wit, and most other good Qualities may be, according to the Ends and Purposes to which they are misemploy'd. *Disimulation* is nothing but the hiding, or disguising, our secret Thoughts or Inclinations under another Appearance. I shall not endeavour to absolve our Sex wholly from all Use of this Quality, or Art (call it which you please) because I think it may, upon many Occasions, be used with Innocence enough, and

upon

upon some can't, without great Im-
 prudence, be omitted. The World
 is too full of *Craft, Malice, and Vio-*
lence, for absolute *Simplicity* to live
 in it. It behoves therefore our Sex,
 as well the other, to live with so
 much Caution and Circumspection,
 in regard to their own Security, that
 their Thoughts and Inclinations may
 not be seen so naked, as to expose
 them to the *Snares, Designs, and*
Practices of crafty Knaves, who would
 make a Property of them, or lay
 them open to the wicked *Efforts* and
 mischievous Impressions of *Envy* or
Malice, whose Pleasure springs from
 the Hurt of others. Nothing gives our
 Adversaries so great an Advantage over
 us, as the Knowledge of our Opinions
 and Affections, with something agree-
 able to which they will be sure to bait
 their Traps and Devices. For this
 reason it is, that it has been prover-
 bially said of Old, that *He that knows*
how to dissemble, knows not how to
live. The Experience of all Ages
 has confirm'd this Observation,
 and ours no less than any of the pre-
 ceding. This premis'd, I suppose no
 wise

wise Man will blame our Sex for the Use of an Art so necessary to preserve them from becoming a *Prey* to every designing Man; an Art of which himself must make great Use to deserve that Title. Yet I am afraid, that upon Enquiry, our Sex will not be found to have so much of it as is requisite, at least not generally; our sedentary Life, and the narrow Limits to which our Acquaintance and Business are circumscrib'd, afford us so little Variety, so regular a Face of things, that we want the Means of obtaining the Mastery of so useful an Art, which no question but we should as soon acquire as Men, had we but equal Opportunities. Hence it is, that *Women* are more apt to shew their *Resentments* upon all *Provocations* than *Men*, and are thought naturally more *peevish* and *captious*, by those that apprehend not the true Reason: Whereas *Men* are altogether as *Stomachful*, and take Offence as soon; but they cover and suppress their Indignation better, not with Design to forget any Injury received, but to wreak their *Revenge* more

vertly

secretly and effectually. This is another Advantage Men derive from Liberty of Conversation and promiscuous Business, wherein the Variety of Contingences they have to provide against, and the Diversity of Tempers they deal with, force them to turn and wind themselves into all Shapes, and accommodate themselves to all Humours. There is indeed yet a higher Sort of *Disimulation*, which is always *Criminal*, that is, when Men not only cloud their real *Sentiments* and Intentions, but make Profession of, and seem zealously to affect the contrary: This by a more proper and restrain'd Name is call'd *Deceit*, and is always us'd in an ill Sense. This Art is most practis'd in Courts, where *Policy* and *Ambition* reign; there you may see *Enemies* hugging and caressing one another with all outward *Expressions* of *Tenderness* and *Friendship* imaginable, while they are secretly contriving each other's Ruin. There you may see Men cringing to those they wou'd scorn if they durst, and *flattering* those they despise and rail at behind their

L

Backs.

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Backs. The Court is a Place where we come very rarely otherwise than as *Spectators*, not as *Actors*; as *Ornaments*, not as *Instruments*; and therefore are seldom involv'd in the guilty Practices of it. Nor is it the Court only, but all Places are infected with this Vice, where there is any Encouragement of Profit or Pleasure to be hop'd from successful Treachery, of which no Place is so barren as not to afford some. This Deceit is so far from being the Vice of our Sex, that they are the common Object on which it is daily practis'd: Nothing is more frequently met with than false Love in Men, which is now grown so familiar, that a Company of Six of both Sexes can scarce meet, but a *sham Passion* commences immediately, is urg'd, protested, and sworn to be real with all imaginable Violence. If these false Arts, Mock-Sighing and Dying, prevail upon any foolish, easy, credulous *Woman*, the *Sham Lover* is blown up with the Success, he is big and in Labour till he be deliver'd of the Secret, which with great Satisfaction he proclaims in all Places where

where he comes: 'Tis his highest Exploit of *Gallantry*, which he will by no Means lose the Credit of. Thus he thinks her Ruin a Step to Reputation, and founds his own Honour upon her Infamy. This, *Madam*, is the basest of Treachery; for they are not satisfied with the Success of their false Promises and Oaths, but they consult over the Weakness of a too good *Woman*, and triumph in her Dishonour. I am sorry there are any *Women* so foolish and forward, as to give Hopes and Encouragement to such ungenerous Fellows; yet we may be assur'd, that they are not a Quarter so many as those vain *Boasters* wou'd make them. Much more may be said on this Head, but that I think it high time to pass on to the next, which is *Enviousness*, so foul a Blot to a fair Character, that no Merit can wash it out, or atone sufficiently for it.

Envy is the Parent of *Calumny*, and the Daughter of *Jealousy*. Men seldom envy others, till they fear being out-strip'd by them in Fortune or Reputation. It is the most criminal,

because the most injurious to Virtue and Worth of all our natural Failings, against which its Malice is generally bent. This Vice and *Jealousy* seem to be more particularly hated of *Providence* than any other; for they carry their Punishment inseparably along with them. The Envious and the Jealous need no other Tormentors than their own Thoughts. The envious Man ruins his own, to disturb another's Tranquillity; and sacrifices his own Happiness and Repose, to a perverse Desire of troubling his Neighbour's. He feeds like *Toads* upon the Venom of the Earth, and sucks in Scandal greedily, that he may at Pleasure disgorge it to the greater Annoyance of other Men. His Mind has the *Vapours*; a sweet Report of any one throws it into Convulsions and Agonies, and a foul one is the Relief and Refreshment of it. A wholesome Air, free from the Blasts of *Detraction* and *Slander*, is as certainly pernicious to him, as *Ireland* to *Frogs* and *Toads*. This Vice is generally disclaim'd by both Sexes, yet generally practis'd by both. Men

love

love as little to have their Reputation as their Chimneys over-topt by their Neighbours ; for they think by that means their Names become dark, as their Houses do smoaky by the other : Yet, thro' a lazy Malignity, had rather pull the others down to their Level, than build their own up higher. This Humour prevails indeed, yet not in equal Measure in both Sexes. For as we have confessedly less *Ambition*, so have we apparently less of this Poison which usually attends it, and arises from a self-interested Principle, which makes them endeavour, by base sinister Means, to level that Merit which they think stands in their Way to Preferment, and which they despair of being able to surmount by honourable Attempts. For what need any one use base Sights to stop the Man, whom by fair Speed he thought he cou'd overtake. No sooner is any Man rais'd to any Eminence in the World, but half the Sex at least join in Confederacy to raise a Battery of Scandal against him, to bring him down again. *Honour* is the Pillory of great Desert, whither a

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Man is no sooner rais'd, but the vile rascally inferior Crowd gather immediately together to throw Dirt at him, and make that which was intended as a Grace and Reward, but a more honourable Punishment. Our Sex seldom arrive to this Pitch of Envy, our Ambition is more bounded and our Desires sooner satisfied. Hence it is, that we are less troubled at the Prosperity of others; for not giving ourselves the Liberty of aiming at things far out of our Power, they are the sooner compass'd, and we the sooner at Ease. He that thinks himself happy, is incapable of envying another's Felicity, since he sees him possess'd of nothing which either he has not, or despises not. Yet it must be confess'd, that the lesser Piques and Grudgings are daily to be met with among us, but no less among Men. What is it that spawns daily such Fries of *Satyrists* without Wit, and *Criticks* without Judgment, but this Humour of carving and nibbling at the Reputation of others? But they are generally abundantly furnish'd with Impudence,

dence, a good Quality, that commonly supplies largely the Want of all other.

A *Critick* of this Sort is one that, for want of *Wit*, sets up for *Judgment*; yet he has so much Ambition to be thought a *Wit*, that he lets his *Spleen* prevail against *Nature*, and turns *Poet*. In this Capacity he is as just to the World, as in the other injurious. For as the *Critick* wrong'd every Body in his Censure, and snarl'd and grinn'd at their Writings, the *Poet* gives them Opportunity to do themselves Justice, to return the Compliment, and laugh at, or despise his. He wants nothing but *Wit* to fit him for a *Satyr*ist, yet he has *Gall* and *Vanity* enough to dispense with that Want, and write without it. His Works are *Libels* upon others, but *Satyrs* upon himself; and while they bark at Men of *Wit*, call him Fool that writes them. He takes his Malice for a Muse, and thinks himself inspir'd when he is only possess'd and blown up with a Status of *Envy* and *Vanity*. His great Helps to Poetry are *Crambo* and *Arithmetick*, by which he aspires to Rhime

Rhime and Numbers, yet mistakes frequently in the Tale of his Fingers. He has a very great *Antipathy* to his own Species, and hates to see a Fool any where but in his Glass. For (as he says) they *provoke* him, and *offend his Eyes*: He follows them as a Dog pursues his Prey, and barks whenever He smells them in his Way: He knows to say no more that *Wit* is scarce, to gingle out a *Rhime*, or tag a *Verse*, or cobble wretched *Prose* to numerous *Lines*: There if he has a *Genius*, there it shines. His Fund of *Criticism* is a Sett of Terms of Art pickt out of the *French Criticks*, or their Translators; and his *Poetical Stock* is a Common-Place of certain *Forms* and *Manners* of Expression. He writes better in *Verse* than *Prose*; for in that there is *Rhime*, in this neither *Rhime* nor *Reason*. He talks much of the *Naivete* of his Thoughts, which appears sufficient in the Dulness of them; yet nothing but the *Pblegmatick*, spiritless *Air* is his own. He rails at Mr. — for want of Breeding and good Manners, without a Grain of either, and steals his own Wit to bespatter him with;

with; but, like an ill *Chymist*, he lets the *Spirit* fly off in drawing over, and retains only the *Pblegm*. He censures Mr. — for too much *Wit*, and corrects him with none. The Difference between Mr. — and him is this; the one has too much *Wit*, and too fine for the Standard; the other not enough to blanch his base Metal, or cover the Brass of his Counterfeits. To compleat himself in the Formalities of *Parnassus*, he falls in Love, and tells the World it is oblig'd to his *Passion* for his *Poetry*; but if his *Mistress* prove no more indulgent than his *Muse*, his Amour is like to conclude but unluckily. For if his Love be no warmer than his Lines, his *Corinna* may play with his Flame without Danger of Burning. He pretends to have written only his sincerest Thoughts: I don't know how well his *Mistress* may take that from the *Lover*; but I dare swear the World will not expect it from the Poet. He is happiest at the Picture of a rhyming Fool, for he need only to look in his Glass, and he may copy a Country Wit from the City Original. If this rhyming

rhyiming Humour lasts, there's a good
 ——— spoil'd for an ill *Poet*; yet
 for his Comfort, Time, Improve-
 ment, and two or three Books more,
 may raise him to Rival *E — S —* and
 sing *London's* Triumphs, to the Envy
 of ——— of happy Memory.

You may wonder, *Madam*, why
 I should give you the Trouble of this
 Character, after I had given you my
 Word to trouble you with no more
 of this Nature. I must confess, I am
 sorry that so foolish an Occasion cou'd
 make me forget myself; but a Book
 newly publish'd happening just at
 this Juncture unluckily to fall into
 my Hands, I cou'd not without In-
 dignation see the Scurrility and In-
 solence with which Mr. ——— and Mr.
 ——— are treated; and cou'd not but
 resent a little the Wrongs done to the
 Memory of Men, whom the rest of
 the World, with Justice, admire; and
 cou'd not help taking Notice, upon
 so fair an Opportunity, that they are
 not, tho' dead, to be so rudely play'd
 with, and made the May-Game of
 ev'ry *Splenetic* Boy. There are some
 yet living, whose Wit and Performances

manances deserve a more respectful Treatment, than they have met with from him: But they are able to revenge their own Quarrel, if they think he deserves the Honour to be scourg'd by them. Nothing but Envy and a vain Conceit of himself could move him to attack the Reputation of Men, whose Verse will always command Admiration, while his own raises nothing but Scorn and Indignation. If his Bookseller were but blest with half a Dozen such Authors, he wou'd in a short time infallibly be *Stationer-General* to all the *Grocers* and *Tobacconists* in the Town.

After this Digression, *Madam*, let us return to our Subject. We stand yet charg'd with *Levity* and *Inconstancy*, two Failings so nearly related, and so generally united, that it is hard to treat of them apart; we will therefore consider them briefly together. *Levity* is an unsteady Humour, that makes Men like or dislike, seek and reject frequently the same things upon slender or no Reasons. This is the Humour of the Infancy of both Sexes,

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Sexes, and proceeds from the Strength of their Appetites, and the Weakness of their Judgments. At these tender Years, every thing we see moves our Curiosities; and because we think little beyond our Appetites, desire impatiently whatever pleases. This wears off in Proportion to the Growth of our Judgments, when we begin to consider the Fatigue, Hazard, Disreputation, and other Inconveniences that attend unreasonable or inordinate Desires. Herein our Sex have a manifest Advantage over the other; for it is confess'd on all Hands, that our Judgments ripen sooner than theirs; whence of course it follows, that this Folly prevails not so long upon us as them. 'Tis yet true, that even the most experienc'd and wisest of us have no small Mixture of it, which appears in the greatest Part of our Actions. But it is certain likewise, that Men have a greater Proportion of it than we. From this it is, that *Novelty* derives all its Charms, and that Men pursue with so much Eagerness and Impatience what they so soon flight if obtain'd. I appeal to the

the Experience of all Mankind, if they do not generally frame to themselves much greater Ideas of any thing they desire, and are unacquainted with, than they find real, when they become familiar to them; and if they did not imagine greater Pleasures while they were in Pursuit, than they met with after they were in Possession of their Wishes. The Imagery of *Fancy* is, like some Paintings, ravishing and surprizing at a due Distance; but approach them near, and all the Charms of Beauty vanish, and they appear rough and unpleasant. Hence it is, that Men grow uneasy, and their Desires pall so soon upon the full Enjoyment of their Wishes; they see then the Imperfections as well as Beauties of what they coveted, which glitter'd so far off, and, like the Moon, appear'd all Lustre and Smoothness; but when arriv'd at, all dark and uneven. These Fallacies Men are more subjected to than we, by those very Privileges which give them in some things the Advantage over us. The Variety of Business, and Society they

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run

run through, the large Acquaintance they contract, give them Encouragement to aspire to, and Hopes to obtain many difficult Things, which our Sex seldom lift their Thoughts up to. I know this aspiring Humour of theirs is generally call'd *Ambition*, and I allow the Term to be proper; but their Ambition works upon their Levity, which only can make them barter certain Ease, Peace, and Security, for uncertain Pomp and Splendor; and forsake a Condition they know to be good, for one they know no more of, than that it shines, and that it glitters, and so part with the true Jewel for the false one. These are the serious and applauded Follies of Mankind, and shew the Weakness and Levity of those we call the greatest and wisest Men, that sacrifice the Ease and Pleasure of their Lives to *popular Breath*, and sounding Titles, which is like bartering a small Diamond for a large Glass Bubble.

Inconstancy is so like *Levity*, that little more needs to be said of it, only that it is commonly restrain'd to the Change of Affections in regard

to Persons, and so is chiefly concern'd in Love and Friendship. It is founded upon Levity, through which we first make an injudicious Choice, and are afterwards as unreasonably disgusted with it. This happens oftner in *Love* than *Friendship*, because the Impressions of *Love* are more suddenly receiv'd, and the Effects of it more violent, than those of *Friendship*; and the Desires which are commonly kindled by one single Perfection, such as *Beauty* or *Wit*, not being suddenly answer'd, are in Process of Time extinguish'd, or abated by Observation of some disgustful Imperfection or other in the Person beloved. This is indeed the true Reason why *Love*, which is generally so hot at first, cools commonly so suddenly; because being generally the Issue of Fancy, not Judgment, it is grounded upon an over great Opinion of those Perfections, which first strike us, and which fall in our Esteem upon more mature Examination. From whence it is likewise, that Men are less constant in their Affections than we; for Beauty only being generally

the Object of their Passion, the Effect must necessarily be as fading as the Cause; their Love therefore being only the Result of Wonder and Surprise, is abated by Familiarity, and decays as they wear off by degrees. Besides, that a Love so founded is liable to be ravish'd by any superior Beauty; or, if not so, yet the Novelty of the former once worne off, the new Comer has the Assistance of Fancy, the Slave of Novelty, to gain the Superiority. This is the Cause why so few real and lasting Passions are found amongst Men: For Charms, depending upon, and owing their Power to Fancy, can maintain no Conquests any longer than That is on their Side, which is as inconstant as the Wind. In this also we are less faulty than they; for, not usually fixing our Affection on so mutable a thing as the *Beauty of a Face*, which a thousand Accidents may destroy, but on *Wit, good Humour*, and other *Graces of the Mind*, as well as of the *Body*, our Love is more durable and constant in proportion to the longer Continuance of those Qualities in the Object.

Object. Neither indeed have we the Means or Temptation to be fickle and inconstant so ready as Men have; for Modesty, and the Rules of Decency observ'd among us, not permitting to us the Liberty of declaring our Sentiments to those we love, as Men may, we dare not indulge a wanton Fancy, or rambling Inclination, which must be stifled in our own Breasts, and cou'd only give us a hopeless Anxiety, unless we were able to inspire the same Passion for us in them; which it were vain to expect, without breaking thro' all Restraint of *Modesty* and *Decorum*, at the Price of our Fame and Reputation, which I hope few are so daring as to venture. Besides this, our Tempers are by Nature calm, sedate, and tender, not apt to be ruffled and disturb'd by Passions, and too fearful to enterprize any thing in Satisfaction of them: Theirs on the contrary, bold, active, and uneven, easily susceptible of all manner of Desires, and readily executing any Designs to gratify them. Thus are we debarr'd the Liberty of choosing for ourselves,

and confin'd to please ourselves out of the Number that like and address to us; of which if we fix our Affections upon any one, we are generally fix'd and unmoveable, as having neither the Inclination to, nor Opportunity of Inconstancy, that the Men have. I don't deny, but that there may be some among us guilty of this Fault; but they are vastly short of the Number of Men involv'd in the like Guilt; amongst whom it is now grown so fashionable, that 'tis become no Scandal; but is daily justified, and the Treachery boasted of as high Gallantry. The Crimes therefore of some few *Women* ought to be no Reproach to the Sex in general. Of Infidelity in Friendship, I shall say little, because I think there are so few Instances of any thing that deserve the Name, that scarce any Age has been so fruitful as to produce two Pair of real and true Friends. I know that the Name is commonly given to such as are link'd by any Ties of Consanguinity, Affinity, Interest, mutual Obligations, Acquaintance, and the like: But these are such Friendships

Friendships (if they may be call'd so) as are always contracted with a tacit Reserve to Interest on both Sides, and seldom last longer than the Prosperity of either Party, and during that are frequently renounc'd upon slight Disobligations, or languish and die of themselves. Yet, if I may presume to give my Opinion in a Case, where Matter of Fact does not appear, I think we shou'd be the more faithful even in this too: For as we are less concern'd in the Affairs of the World, so we have less Temptation from Interest to be false to our Friends. Neither are we so likely to be false through Fear, because our Sex are seldom engag'd in matters of any Danger. For these Reasons it is, our Sex are generally more hearty and sincere in the ordinary Friendships they make than Men, among whom they are usually clogg'd with so many Considerations of Interest and Punctilio's of Honour; to which last perhaps are owing the greatest Part of those honourable Actions which are mistakenly imputed to Friendship. For something done to

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to salve Honour, commonly puts a Period to all Friendship with unfortunate Persons, whom Men think they may afterward grow cold to without Reproach.

These are the most considerable Imperfections, or at least those which with most Colour of Reason are charg'd upon us as general Defects; and I hope, *Madam*, I have fairly shewn, that the other Sex are both by Interest and Inclination more expos'd and more subject to them than we. *Pride, Lust, Cruelty*, and many more, are by the Declaimers against us thrown into the Scale to make Weight and bear us down, but with such manifest Injustice, that without giving myself any farther Trouble, I dare appeal to any reasonable Man, and leave him to decide the Difference. I know there was a *Tullia*, a *Claudia*, and a *Messalina*; there was likewise a *Sardanapalus*, a *Nero*, a *Caligula*; but if the Sexes in general are to be approach'd with and measur'd by these, Human Race is certainly the vilest Part of the Creation. 'Tis very ill *Logick* to argue from Particulars

particulars to Generals, and where the
 Premises are singular, to conclude
 universally: But if they will allow
 us the Liberty they take themselves,
 and come to numbering the Vicious
 of both Sexes, they will certainly out-
 poll us by infinite Numbers. It
 were therefore better Policy surely
 in them to quit a Way of Arguing,
 which is at once so false, and so much
 to the Disadvantage of the Cause they
 contend for; and when they can, by
 sound Arguments, make out any
 Advantages their Sex has over ours,
 other than what I have already grant-
 ed, I am ready to be convinc'd and
 become their Convert; and I make
 no doubt but every ingenious Man
 will do as much by me. Thus I have
 endeavour'd to vindicate our Sex,
 from the unjust Imputations with
 which some unreasonable malicious
 Men would load us: For I am
 willing to think the greater, or at
 least the better Part of their Sex,
 more generous than to encourage
 their Scandal. There remains no-
 thing more, but to shew that there
 are some necessary Qualifications to
 be

be acquir'd, some good Improvements to be made by ingenious *Gentlemen* in the Company of our Sex.

Of this Number are *Complaisance*, *Gallantry*, *good Humour*, *Invention*, and *an Art* which (tho' frequently abus'd) is of admirable Use to those that are Masters of it, the *Art of Insinuation* and many others. 'Tis true, a Man may be an honest and understanding Man, without any of these Qualifications; but he can hardly be a polite, a well-bred, and agreeable-taking Man, without all, or most of these. Without them, *Honesty*, *Courage*, or *Wit*, are like rough *Diamonds*, or *Gold* in the *Ore*; they have their intrinsic Value and Worth before, but they are doubtful and obscure till they are polish'd, refin'd, and receive *Lustre* and *Esteem* from these.

The Principle of these is *Complaisance*, a good Quality, without which, in a competent Measure, no Man is fitted for Society. This is best learnt in our Company, where all Men affect Gaiety, and endeavour to be agreeable. *State-News*, *Politicks*, *Religion*, or private *Business*, take up
the

the greatest Part of their Conversation, when they are among themselves only. These are Subjects that employ their Passions too much to leave any room for *Complaisance*; they raise too much Heat to suffer Men to be easy and pleasant; and Men are too easy when they talk of them to suppress their natural Temper, which are apt to break out upon any Opposition. Men are as apt to defend their Opinions as their Property, and wou'd take it as well to have their Titles to their Estates question'd as their Sense; and perhaps in that they imitate the Conduct of our Sex, and do like indulgent Mothers, who are most tender of those Children that are weakest. But however it be, I have observ'd when such Arguments have been introduc'd even in our Company, and by Men that affected Indifference and abundance of Temper, that very few have been able to shew so much Mastery, but that something appear'd either in their Air, or Expression, or in the Tone of their Voices, which argu'd a greater Warmth and Concern, than
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is proper for the Conversation of *Gentlemen*, or the Company of *Ladies*. These Uneasinesses happen not so often among us, because the Men look upon us to have very little Interest in the Publick Affairs of the World, and therefore trouble us very seldom with their grave serious Trifles, which they debate with so much Earnestness among one another. They look upon us as things design'd and contriv'd only for their Pleasure, and therefore use us tenderly, as Children do their Favourite Bawbles. They talk gaily and pleasantly to us; they do or say nothing that may give us any Disgust or *Chagrin*; they put on their chearfullest Looks, and their best Humour, that they may excite the like in us: They never oppose us, but with a great deal of Ceremony, or in Raillery, not out of a Spirit of Opposition (as they frequently do one another) but to maintain a pleasant Argument, or heighten by Variety of Opinions, an agreeable Entertainment. Mirth and good Humour reign generally in our Society, good Manners always; for

with

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with us Men shew in a manner the Reverse of what they are one to another: They let their Thoughts play at Liberty, and are very careful of the Expression, that nothing harsh or obscene can escape them, that may shock a tender Mind, or offend a modest Ear. This Caution it is, which is the Root of *Complaisance*, which is nothing but a Desire to oblige People, by complying with their Humours. 'Tis true, some Tempers are too obstinate and froward, ever to arrive at any great Height of this good Quality; yet there is nothing so stubborn but it may be bent. Assiduity and constant Practice will contract such Habits, as will make any thing easy and familiar, even to the worst contriv'd Disposition; but where Nature concurs, Men are soon perfect. This is one great Advantage Men reap by our Society, nor is it to be despised by the wisest of them, who know the Use of this Accomplishment, and are sensible that it is hardly, if at all, to be acquir'd, but by conversing with us; for tho' Men may have Wit and Judgment, yet the

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Liberty

Liberty they take of thwarting and opposing one another, makes them eager and disputative, impatient, fowre, and morose; till by conversing with us, they grow insensibly asham'd of such Rustick Freedom. The Truth of this is evident from the Observation of the *Universities*, and *Inns of Court*; I mean those Students in them that lead a more recluse and monastick Life, and converse little with our Sex. They want neither Wit nor Learning, and frequently neither Generosity nor Good-Nature; yet when they come into gay, tho' ingenious Company, are either damp'd and silent, or unseasonably frolicksome and free; so that they appear either dull or ridiculous.

Nor is *Complaisance* the only thing these Men want; they want likewise the *Gallantry* of those Men that frequent our Company. This Quality is the Height and Perfection of Civility, without which it is either languishing or formal, and with which it appears always with an engaging Air of Kindness and Good-Will.

sets a Value upon the most inconsiderable Trifles, and turns every Civility into an Obligation. For in ordinary Familiarities, and civil Correspondences, we regard not so much what, as how things are done; the Manner is more look'd upon, than the Matter of such Courtesies. Almost all Men that have had a liberal and good Education, know what is due to good Manners and civil Company. But till they have been us'd a little to our Society, their Modesty looks like Constraint upon them, and looks like a forc'd Compliance to uneasy Rules, and Forms of Civility. Conversing frequently with us makes them familiar to Men; and when they are convinc'd as well of the easiness, as the Necessity of them, they are soon reconcil'd to the Practice. This Point once gain'd, they become expert in the common and necessary Practices. Those that have any natural Bravery of Mind, will never be contented to stop there; Indifference is too cold and phlegmatick a Thing for them; a little formal Ceremony and common Civilities,

vilities, such as are paid to every one of course, will not satisfy their ambitious Spirits, which will put them upon endeavouring for better Reception, and obliging those, whom they can't, without Reproach to themselves, offend. This is the original and first Spring of Gallantry, which is an Humour of obliging all People, as well in our Actions as Words. It differs from *Complaisance*, this being more active, that more passive: This inclines us to oblige, by doing or saying after our own Humours such things as we think will please; that by submitting to, and following, theirs. A Man may be *complaisant* without *Gallantry*; but he can't be *gallant* without *Complaisance*. For 'tis possible to please, and be agreeable, without shewing our own Humours to others; but 'tis impossible without some Regard to theirs: Yet this Pleasure will be but faint and languid, without a Mixture of both. This Mixture of Freedom, Observance, and a Desire of pleasing, when rightly tempered, is the true Composition of *Gallantry*; of which, whoever

whoever is compleat Master, can never fail of being both admir'd and belov'd. This Accomplishment is best, if not only to be, acquir'd by conversing with us; for besides the natural Deference which the Males of every observable Species of the Creation pay to their Females, and the Reasons before given for *Complaisance*, which all hold good here, there is a tender Softness in the Frame of our Minds, as well as in the Constitution of our Bodies, which inspires Men, a Sex more rugged, with the like Sentiments and Affections, and infuses gently and insensibly a Care to oblige, and a Concern not to offend us.

Hence it is that they employ all their *Art*, *Wit*, and *Invention*, to say and do things, that may appear to us surprizing and agreeable, either for their Novelty or Contrivance. The very End and Nature of Conversation among us retrench abundance of those things, which make the greatest Part of Men's Discourse; and they find themselves oblig'd to strain their Inventions, to fetch, from other Springs,

Streams proper to entertain us with. This puts them upon beating and ranging over the Fields of Fancy to find something new, something pretty to offer to us, and by this means refine, at the same time, their Wit, and enlarge and extend their Invention; for by forcing them out of the common Road, they are necessitated to invent new Arguments, and seek new Ways to divert and please us; and by restraining the large Liberty they take one with another, they are compell'd to polish their Wit, and file off the Roughness of it. To this they owe, the Neatness of Raillery, to which abundance of Gentlemen are now arriv'd: For Contrariety of Opinions, being that which gives Life and Spirit to Conversation, as well Women as Men, do frequently hold Arguments contrary to their real Opinions, only to heighten the Diversion, and improve the Pleasure of Society. In these the utmost Care is taken to avoid all things that may sound harsh, offensive, or indecent; their Wit is employ'd only to raise Mirth, and promote good Humour.

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Conditions that can't well be observ'd, when Men contend for Realities, and dispute for the Reputation of their Wit or Judgment, and the Truth of their Opinions. 'Tis true, these Improvements are to be made only by Men that have by Nature an improveable Stock of Wit and good Sense; for those that have it not, being unable to distinguish what is proper for their Imitation, are apt to ape us in those Things which are the peculiar Graces and Ornaments of our Sex, and which are the immediate Objects of Sight, and need no further Reflection or Thinking. This Affectation is notorious in our modern *Beaus*, who observing the Care taken by some of our Sex in the setting off their Persons, without penetrating any further into the Reasons Women have for it, or considering that what became them might be ridiculous in themselves, fall to picking, sprucing and dressing their Campagne Faces, and ill-contriv'd Bodies, that now, like all foolish Imitators, they out-do the Originals, and out-powder, out-patch, and out-paint

paint the vaineſt and moſt extravagant of our Sex at thoſe Follies, and are perpetually cocking, bruffling, twiring, and making Grimaces, as if they expected we ſhou'd make Addreſſes to them in a ſhort time. Yet ought not this to diſcourage any ingenious Perſon, or bring any Scandal upon our Converſation, any more than Travelling ought to be brought into Diſrepute; becauſe it is obſerv'd that thoſe who go *abroad Fools*, return *Fops*. It is not in our Power to alter Nature, but to poliſh it; and if an Aſs has learnt all his Paces, 'tis as much as the thing is capable of; 'twere abſurd to expect he ſhou'd chop *Logick*. This is ſo far from being an Objection againſt us, that it is an Argument that none but ingenious Men are duly qualified to converſe with us; who, by our Means have not only been fitted and finiſh'd for great things, but have actually aſpir'd to them. For 'tis my Opinion, that we owe the gallant Verſes of Mr. *Waller*, to his converſing much with Ladies. And I remember an Opinion of a very ingenious Perſon,

son, who ascribes the Ruin of the *Spanish Grandeur*, in great measure, to the ridiculing, in the Person of *Don Quixote*, the *Gallantry* of that Nation toward their *Ladies*. This Opinion, however ingenious, carries me beyond the Scope and Design of the present Argument; and therefore I shall leave all further Consideration of it to those that are more at Leisure than I am at present.

C O N C L U S I O N.

WHAT I have hitherto said has not been with an Intention to stir up any of my own Sex to revolt against the *Men*, or to invert the present Order of Things with regard to *Government* and *Authority*. No, let them stand as they are: I only mean to shew my Sex that they are not so despicable as the *Men* would have them believe themselves, and that we are capable of as much Greatness of Soul as the best of that haughty Sex. And I am fully convinced, it would be to the joint Interest of both to think so.

This is plain from the ill Consequences

quences attending the opposite Error. The *Men*, by thinking us incapable of improving our Intellects, have entirely thrown us out of all the Advantages of Education; and thereby contributed as much as possible to make us the senseless Creatures they imagine us. So that, for want of *Education*, we are render'd subject to all the Follies they dislike in us, and are loaded with their ill Treatment for Faults of their own creating in us, and which, we are denied the Helps necessary to avoid. And what is the Consequence of this tyrannic Treatment of us? Why, it finally reverts on themselves: The same Want of *Learning* and *Education* which hurries *Women* into what displeases the *Men*, debars them of the Virtues requisite to support them under the ill Treatment they are loaded with by the *Men*, in Consequence of their Indiscretions: And for want of those Virtues they often run very unjustifiable Lengths to be revenged on their Tyrants. Thus does it arrive generally speaking that both *Men* and *Women* hold one another in sovereign

vereign Contempt, and therefore vie with each other, which shall treat the other the worst. Whereas how happy might they be, wou'd both Sexes but resolve *each* to give the *other* that just Esteem which is their Due!

However, if Truth may be spoken; it is undeniable that the Blame lies chiefly and originally in the *Men*. Since if they wou'd but allow *Women* the Advantages of Education and Literature; the latter would learn to despise those Follies and Trifles, for which they are at present unjustly despised. Our Sex wou'd be enabled to give the *Men*, a better Opinion of our Capacity of Head and Disposition of Heart: And the *Men*, in Proportion to the Increase of their Esteem for us, wou'd lessen, and by Degrees reform, their ill Treatment of us. *Women* wou'd make it their Study to improve their Parts, and with Increase of Knowledge they must grow good. Their Pleasure and Study wou'd be to entertain the *Men* with Sense, and to add Solidity to their Charms. By which Means *both Sexes* wou'd be happy, and *neither*

ther have Cause to blame the *other*. But while they lock up from us all the Avenues to Knowledge, they cannot without Reproach to themselves blame us for any Misconduct which Ignorance may be Mother of: And we cannot but accuse them of the most cruel Injustice in disesteeming and ill-using us for Faults they put out of our Power to correct.

It wou'd be needless to say any more on this Subject, if it was not in answer to some weak People who are vainly persuaded, that there is a real Difference between *Us* and the *Men* in regard to *Virtue*: Whereas nothing can be more absurd. It is undoubtedly true, that there have been, and are, many very good, and as many very bad, People of both Sexes. And if it shou'd be supposed, tho' it cannot be proved, that some *Women* have been more flagitious than any *Men*; that will no ways redound to the Dishonour of our Sex in general. *The Corruption of the best is ever the worst*: And shou'd we grant that in Quality of Vices some of our Sex have exceeded the *Men*; it must be

be own'd that their Numbers wou'd at least ballance the Account. I believe no one will deny but that at least, upon the most moderate Computation, there are a thousand *bad Men* to one *bad Woman*. But to know whether either Sex be naturally more vicious than the other, we must observe that there is nothing but the Soul capable of Virtue, which consists in a firm Resolution of doing what we judge the best, according to the Dictates of *Reason* and *Religion* compared with the different Occurrences we meet with in Life. Now the Mind is no less capable in *Women* than in *Men* of that firm Resolution which makes up Virtue, nor of knowing the Occasions of putting it in Practice.

Weak as the Generality reckon us *Women*, we can regulate our Passions as well as the *Men*; and are no more inclined to Vice than to Virtue. We might even make the Scale turn in our own Favour in this Particular, without doing Violence to Truth or Justice. However, upon the Whole, if there be equal Occasion of finding

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Fault in both Sexes; that which accuses the other offends against natural Equity. If there be more Evil in the *Men* than in us, and they are too stupified to see it; they are guilty of Rashness in finding Fault with our Sex. And if they do see and maliciously conceal their own greater Faults; is it not base in them to blame us who have less? If there be more good in *Women* than in *Men*; ought not the *Men* to be accused of Ignorance or Envy in not acknowledging it? When a *Woman* has more Virtue than Vice, shou'd not the one atone for the other? This is especially true when our Defects are insurmountable, and when we are deprived of Means to rid ourselves of them; which is generally the Case with most of the Faulty of our Sex, and ought to merit them Compassion rather than Contempt. Lastly, when our Failings are only seemingly such, or at most but trivial in themselves, it is imprudent, malicious, and pitiful to insist on them. And yet it is easy to prove, that such are the Generality of the Faults we are charged

charged with, which can any way affect us all.

Thus then does it hitherto fully appear, how falsely we are deem'd, by the *Men*, wanting in that Solidity of Sense which they so vainly value themselves upon. Our Right is the same with theirs to all *publick Employments*; we are endow'd, by Nature, with Geniuses at least as capable of filling them as theirs can be: And our Hearts are as susceptible of *Vir-* as our Heads are of the *Sciences*. We neither want *Spirit, Strength*, nor *courage*, to defend a Country, nor *Prudence* to rule it. Our *Souls* are as perfect as theirs, and the *Organs* they depend on are generally more *refined*. However, if the Bodies be compared to decide the Right of Excellence in either Sex; we need not contend: The *Men* themselves I presume will give it up. They cannot deny but that we have the Advantage of them in the internal Mechanism of our Frames: Since in us is produced the most beautiful and wonderful of all Creatures: And how much have we not the Advantage of them in Outside? What

What Beauty, Comeliness, and Graces, has not Heaven attach'd to our Sex above theirs? I shou'd blush with Scorn to mention this, if I did not think it an Indication of our Souls being also in a State of greater Delicacy; for I cannot help thinking that the wise Author of Nature suited our Frames to the Souls he gave us. And surely then the Acuteness of our Minds, with what passes in the Inside of our Heads, ought to render us at least *EQUALS* to *Men*, since the Outside seldom fails to make us their absolute Mistresses.

And yet I wou'd have none of my Sex build their Authority barely on so slight a Foundation. No: Good Sense will out-last a handsome Face: And the Dominion gain'd over Hearts by Reason is lasting. I wou'd therefore exhort all my Sex to throw aside idle Amusements, and to betake themselves to the Improvement of their Minds, that we may be able to act with that becoming Dignity our Nature has fitted us to; and, without claiming or valuing it, shew ourselves worthy something from them, as much above their base Esteem, as they

they conceit themselves above us. In a Word, let us shew them, by what little we do without Aid of Education, the much we might do if they did us Justice; that we may force a Blush from them, if possible, and compel them to confess their own Baseness to us, and that the worst of us deserve much better Treatment than the best of us receive.

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